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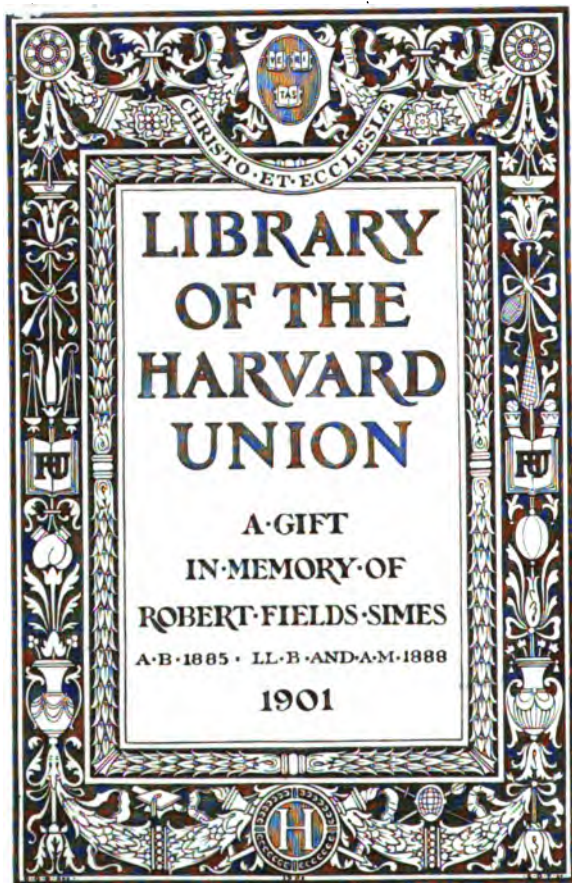
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THE COLOUR  
OF PARIS  
BY THE ACADEMIE  
GONCOURT



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THE COLOUR OF  
**P A R I S**

**NEW AND CHEAPER EDITION**

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EIFFEL TOWER IN THE EVENING MIST

# THE GARDENS OF PARIS

THE GARDENS OF PARIS  
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
BENÉDICTE DE LUXEMBOURG  
ILLUSTRATED BY  
J. B. BENOIST. WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
BY BENÉDICTE DE LUXEMBOURG  
THE GARDENS OF PARIS  
BY ANNE DE LUXEMBOURG  
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE ARTIST

NEW YORK  
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY  
1915



# THE COLOUR OF PARIS

HISTORIC, PERSONAL, & LOCAL  
BY MESSIEURS LES ACADÉMICIENS  
GONCOURT. UNDER THE GENERAL  
EDITORSHIP OF M. LUCIEN DES-  
CAVES. ILLUSTRATED BY YOSHIO  
MARKINO. WITH INTRODUCTION  
BY M. L. BÉNÉDITE, CONSERVATEUR  
DU MUSÉE NATIONAL DU LUXEM-  
BOURG, & AN ESSAY BY THE ARTIST

NEW YORK  
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY  
1915

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This book has been written in collaboration by  
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[Printed in England]

## PRÉFACE

**P**ARIS vu par un Japonais ! La chose, apparemment, est piquante. On se prépare à voir défiler toute une suite de Kakemonos multicolores où la Butte Montmartre élève ses pentes comme le cône du Fushiyama, où les jolies parisiennes, mi-vêtues, se baignent, s'essuient, se peignent, devant leur miroir comme les exquises mousmés d'Outamaro, où les bateaux-mouches glissent silencieusement sur la Seine, leurs lanternes allumées dans la nuit, ainsi que les bateaux de fleurs dans les nocturnes charmants d'Hiroshighé.

Vous n'y êtes pas, ou, du moins, vous n'y êtes plus. M. Yoshio Markino nous détrompe. C'est que les temps sont bien changés. Un abîme sépare le Japon d'aujourd'hui du Japon d'hier, et il n'y a plus grand'chose de commun entre un peintre japonais de 1908 et un peintre japonais de 1878 ou même de 1888. Une simple petite révolution, une de ces révolutions comme en ont tant connu la France, et aussi l'Angleterre, mais une révolution unique dans l'histoire du monde par ses résultats, a fait passer tout d'un coup, sans transition, sans préparation, cette nation de la féodalité du Moyen-Âge à la vie constitutionnelle et parlementaire des États démocratiques les plus avancés.

Ne vous représentez donc plus les routes de Tokio encombrées par les cortèges magnifiques des Daimios

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## THE COLOUR OF PARIS

venant porter périodiquement leurs hommages de vassalité au Shogoun, ce puissant maire du palais qui avait, depuis trois siècles, éliminé le Mikado; n' imaginez plus les Samouraï partant en guerre sur leurs petits chevaux intrépides, aux longues crinières flottantes tressées de soie et d'or, la tête casquée de quelque masque terrible, le torse défendu par une carapace aux lames de laque noire, et qui offraient l'aspect fantastique de gigantesques crustacés infernaux. Ne comptez plus voir glisser avec une grâce mystérieuse et une étrange majesté, entre leurs cloisons de papier immaculé, ainsi que nous les dépeint Pierre Loti, les dames d'honneur de l'Impératrice, impassibles dans leurs dalmatiques rigides blasonnées de fleurs éclatantes.

Fini le Japon des Shiounsho, des Kiyonaga, des Toyokouni! Fini le Japon des geishas et des mousmés, le Japon de Madame Prune et de Madame Chrysanthème! Le sifflet strident des locomotives déchire l'air sur les longues routessillonnées de rails. Les belles armes d'acier doux, gras et lourd, damasquiné d'or, aux gardes de fer minutieusement fouillées en petites sculptures merveilleuses, sont remisées dans les musées, comme des choses exotiques et lointaines. Elles sont remplacées par les petits fusils à répétition, les mitrailleuses et les pièces d'artillerie de tout calibre. Au lieu de bateaux de fleurs dans les anses, en avant des ports sont rangés à l'ancre les hauts cuirassés et les petits torpilleurs qui ont fait naguère leurs preuves contre une grande puissance de l'Occident. Les belles dames d'honneur se font habiller, hélas! par les couturières et les modistes de la Rue de la Paix. Et

## PRÉFACE

quant aux magnifiques Daimïos, ces grands feudataires ont échangé l'éclat de leur train somptueux contre le veston de cheviotte et la redingote de serge, sans parler du "melon" et du chapeau haut de forme. Ils ont, d'ailleurs, cédé le pas, ces pauvres ducs, marquis, ou comtes, aux membres élus de la Chambre des Représentants, dont les groupes politiques, les "extrêmes" et les "centres," les *Seyoukai*, les *Shimpoto*, ou les *Daïdo-Club*, s'allient ou s'opposent pour maintenir ou renverser les ministères.

Ce nouveau Japon constitutionnel, non plus seulement industriel, mais manufacturier, ce Japon qui est sorti des chimères du passé pour entrer dans la réalité positive du présent, pouvait-il continuer à penser, à contempler et à voir comme celui de la veille? A une mentalité politique et sociale nouvelle devait correspondre une mentalité philosophique et artistique nouvelle, c'est-à-dire une nouvelle esthétique conforme à ce développement dans le sens occidental.

C'est en effet le phénomène qui s'est produit. Avec les mœurs, les costumes, les lois, les industries de l'Occident, avec les méthodes, scientifiques et économiques, se sont également imposées à ce peuple d'extrême Asie les méthodes artistiques des écoles de l'Europe, leur façon de voir et de réaliser. Et, chose singulière! c'est au moment même où les Arts d'extrême Orient—qui avaient déjà, au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, exercé une si vive influence sur nos arts et nos industries—étaient comme découverts à nouveau sous cette modalité encore inédite de l'art japonais, et allaient donner à nos arts et en particulier à nos arts décoratifs une direction imprévue et une im-



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS

pulsion si vigoureuse, c'est à ce moment même que la vision européenne, l'esthétique gréco-latine commençait, de son côté, à s'implanter dans l'art du Japon.

La fameuse révolution japonaise date, en effet, de 1868. Or c'est en 1862 que les Arts Japonais firent leur première apparition remarquée, en Europe, à l'occasion de l'Exposition de Londres. C'est vers la même date, également, que, en France, par suite de circonstances sur lesquelles il serait trop long de s'étendre ici, et que, du reste, j'ai fait connaître ailleurs, un groupe de littérateurs et d'artistes, à la suite du graveur Bracquemond qui avait ouvert la voie, les Whistler, les Fantin-Latour, les Tissot, les Burty, les Goncourt, répandirent le goût de ces bibelots merveilleux de bronze et de laque, de porcelaine et de jade, et surtout de ces admirables estampes en couleur dont les dispositions de mise en place pour la composition, les audaces de juxtaposition dans les tons, le dessin expressif, la mimique animée, la profonde poésie naturaliste influencèrent si fortement les arts européens du dernier quart du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle.

Pour comprendre la différence essentielle qui existe entre la vision extrême-orientale et la vision gréco-latine, il faut comparer les deux méthodes correspondantes de dessin.

Le dessin japonais est à proprement parler un dessin architectural, en ce sens qu'il représente les objets par leur projection sur un plan vertical. Les personnages et les objets ainsi figurés n'ont donc que deux dimensions : la hauteur et la largeur; ils ignorent la profondeur. Ce dessin procède par le contour, tandis que la coloration

## PRÉFACE

s'opère par à-plats. Les Japonais d'autrefois connaissaient bien la perspective linéaire qui diminue les proportions des objets suivant la distance, mais ils ne connaissaient pas la perspective aérienne qui distribue les plans à leur place.

Toute autre est la conception gréco-latine. Nous voyons par le relief, nous traduisons par ce qu'on appelle le *modelé*, c'est-à-dire en exprimant le jeu de la lumière et de l'ombre sur les saillies et les rentrants des corps. Nous considérons les êtres et les objets aussi sous leur troisième dimension : celle de l'épaisseur ; nous cherchons à établir leurs volumes dans les profondeurs de l'espace, nous nous appliquons à les faire tourner, et nous nous préoccupons même de tenir compte de ces couches de l'espace, de ces masses fluides de l'atmosphère dans lesquelles se fondent les contours et s'atténuent les tons.

Passer d'une méthode à l'autre c'était donc aussi pour l'esthétique japonaise une révolution véritable. Qu'on essaie de se figurer, par exemple, Hok'saï devenu Corot !

Parmi les artistes japonais, les uns, retardataires impénitents, ont persisté dans la vieille manière chère aux ancêtres, répétant sur la soie ou le papier, soit les animaux sauvages ou domestiques, soit les paysages, soit les scènes de la vie populaire, soit les vieilles légendes locales. D'autres ont marché avec plus ou moins d'hésitation, plus ou moins de témérité, dans la voie des méthodes européennes.

Les résultats obtenus jusqu'à ce jour avaient pu donner quelque inquiétude sur le succès de ces brusques transformations. Mais c'était augurer à tort d'une race si in-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS

telligente, si curieuse, si apte à l'imitation, et, par-dessus tout, si extraordinairement sensible aux images.

Le cas de M. Yoshio Markino est instructif parce qu'il est un exemple exceptionnellement significatif de cette assimilation d'un artiste japonais à notre esthétique occidentale. Il est vrai de dire que, ainsi que la plupart des jeunes japonais, ambitieux de se montrer à la hauteur des événements nouveaux, M. Markino n'a pas attendu l'âge d'homme pour se préparer à cette initiation aux mystères de l'esthétique du vieux monde européen. Il appartient à une génération qui a trouvé le nouvel état de choses complètement établi, et pour laquelle le passé, bien que tout récent encore, n'était plus de la réalité, mais de l'histoire. Pour ceux-ci, donc, nul effort à faire pour refouler des préjugés bien naturels et vaincre des préventions fort légitimes. Ils étaient tout-à-fait propres à l'assimilation.

M. Markino quitta de bonne heure son pays natal pour aller étudier aux États-Unis. C'est presque toujours par ce séjour ou ce stage en Amérique que débute la jeunesse studieuse du Japon. Leur esprit, avide de nouveautés, y est séduit peut-être par tout ce que la civilisation occidentale revêt, dans ce pays, d'exagérations colossales. Car ces petits artisans industriels ne voient plus que par immenses usines, ces incomparables virtuoses du travail manuel ne rêvent plus que du labeur automatique de la machine. Il y a aussi ce fait, que l'accès des nouveaux continents est plus facile et plus proche. Quoiqu'il en soit, M. Yoshio Markino partit pour l'Amérique à l'âge de quinze ans, et c'est là qu'il prit contact avec le

## PRÉFACE

mouvement artistique qui relève, comme on sait, de certaines traditions britanniques, mais surtout des doctrines de l'école française. Depuis Whistler, Saint-Gaudens, La Farge ou Sargent, jusqu'aux plus jeunes d'aujourd'hui, elle a formé à peu près toute l'école américaine. M. Markino eut-il quelque guide particulier ? Je ne crois pas. Il connut bien La Farge, ce grand artiste, maître peintre et maître verrier, pour ne pas dire encore maître écrivain, qui s'est tellement passionné pour les civilisations d'extrême-Orient qu'il en est devenu un peu comme un extrême-Oriental lui-même. Mais ce fut tout-à-fait occasionnellement et sans qu'on en puisse tirer aucune conséquence. M. Markino se débrouilla tout seul. C'est la chose du monde la plus facile à un originaire du Japon, qui est bien le peuple le plus débrouillard du monde. Le caractère du jeune artiste, cependant, accusait plutôt une extrême réserve et comme une certaine timidité. Mais il avait le goût des images : nulle autre satisfaction n'égalait pour lui celle de contempler les spectacles de la vie. Il avait, en somme, ce qu'on appelle la vocation. Pour ces natures privilégiées aucun effort ne coûte, aucun obstacle ne rebute, et le meilleur maître est toujours en soi.

Après un long séjour aux États-Unis, M. Markino vint séjourner à Londres. Son propre pays, il le sentait, n'offrait plus, ou était loin encore de pouvoir offrir, aucune ressource à une esprit aussi entièrement émancipé. La période de crise transitionnelle que traverse l'école japonaise n'est pas encore à son terme. Ceux qui en sont exceptionnellement sortis éprouvent quelque malaise

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS

près des autres. M. Yoshio Markino resta donc à Londres. Là, un éditeur d'esprit curieux et avisé eut l'idée de lui demander une série de vues de la Capitale britannique, "La Couleur de Londres," comme c'est ici, dans le présent livre, "La Couleur de Paris."

C'était là une idée ingénieuse, car si rien n'est intéressant comme de connaître le jugement des étrangers sur soi, rien n'est instructif, semble-t-il, comme de se figurer l'image qu'ils se font de nous. On y éprouve la surprise de se considérer dans un miroir de genre inconnu. Nous percevons les caractères par lesquels nous les frappons, et, par suite, par lesquels nous devons différer d'eux; car ils ont dû les noter comme étant essentiellement exotiques. Qu'un Français ou un Anglais aille au Japon, cherchera-t-il à peindre autre chose que les choses bien japonaises, celles qui lui paraissent différer absolument des aspects de son propre pays? Un Japonais, de même, doit chercher à Londres les choses les plus londoniennes, à Paris les choses les plus parisiennes.

La Couleur de Londres, la Couleur de Paris! cela montre bien que M. Markino ne s'est pas soucié de faire des portraits de lieux. Rien ne ressemble moins que ses aquarelles à l'instantané de la photographie, ou à la description détaillée du dessin de touriste. La couleur, c'est la sensation, de Londres ou de Paris, qu'il veut nous donner.

Y a-t-il vraiment une couleur de Paris et une couleur de Londres? Assurément, et les villes ont non seulement leur couleur, mais elles ont leur odeur. Les vrais voyageurs ne s'y trompent pas, et cet ordre de sensations purement

## PRÉFACE

organiques est ce qui entretient le plus la nostalgie des pays quittés. Nul n'a pu traduire encore, si ce n'est par le prestige insuffisant des mots, la nature particulière de ces sensations subtiles. Mais, en ce qui concerne la couleur, celle de Londres et celle de Paris ont été incarnées respectivement dans l'œuvre des deux grands magiciens de la lumière et de l'atmosphère—Turner et Corot.

L'un traduit, par la sorcellerie éblouissante de sa palette fantastique, la grande fantasmagorie des brouillards rous-sâtres et des fumées de la Tamise. L'autre, par les enchantements de sa brosse finement attendrie, a fixé l'atmosphère délicate dans laquelle le clair soleil parisien semble émousser ses dards.

M. Yoshio Markino, naturellement, n'a pensé ni à l'un ni à l'autre de ces maîtres. Il a exprimé Londres et Paris comme il les a vus et un peu comme il a aimé les voir.

Ce qu'il a aimé dans Paris, en effet, ce n'est pas la franche clarté de la lumière diurne. Il ne partage pas la passion des impressionnistes pour le soleil du grand jour. Son idiosyncrasie japonaise apparaît. Fils d'un pays maritime aux côtes profondément découpées, plus encore, certes, que l'Angleterre, pays de brumes, de nuages et de pluies, M. Markino a gardé le goût des effets voilés, des brouillards, des crépuscules, des heures vagues "entre chien et loup," et surtout des nocturnes. C'est la Seine avec le miroitement des eaux et la moire lumineuse qu'y dessinent les lanternes des bateaux-omnibus, les Tuileries avec la perspective de l'Obélisque et de l'Arc de Triomphe dans la pourpre embrumée du soir, l'Arc de l'Étoile lui-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS

même, dressant sa masse dans le bleuissement de la nuit et la clarté blanche des lampadères électriques, les stations du métropolitain sur les boulevards, où les figures des piétons et des cochers font des ombres chinoises violemment découpées sur le fond éblouissant des devantures de cafés, l'entrée de l'Hippodrome avec ses flamboiements de lumière, le pont Alexandre III où les groupes de jeunes femmes se retroussent sous la pluie qui réfléchit les lanternes sur les trottoirs.

Les spectacles accoutumés prennent quelque chose d'irréel par le choix du temps ou de l'heure, et rien, à la vérité, n'est moins réaliste que l'art de M. Markino. Il travaille toujours à l'aquarelle. C'est encore une trace de son individualité japonaise. La peinture à l'huile, bien que quelques uns s'y soient plus ou moins heureusement essayés, se prête mal, par l'opacité de sa matière, son épaisseur, les instruments des brosses dures, tout son métier d'ébauches heurtées ou de fini par superposition, au travail facile de ces mains alertes qui ne posent pas, qui n'insistent pas. Il leur faut un instrument souple, léger, vif et rapide.

La méthode de M. Markino correspond, d'ailleurs, à la nature du procédé qu'il emploie. Il n'opère pas d'après nature, ou, du moins, il ne prend sur les lieux que les renseignements indispensables. Tout son travail est de mémoire, et c'est en quoi il est particulièrement instructif, parce qu'il est moins objectif, qu'il nous donne plus exactement son impression personnelle. Ce procédé n'a rien qui nous étonne, car il est depuis longtemps connu et employé chez nous. Il a fait même, en France, l'objet

## PRÉFACE

d'un enseignement spécial, devenu célèbre par ses résultats avec un maître tel que Lecoq de Boisbaudran, qui fut, on le sait, l'éducateur de toute une génération de grands artistes, tels que les Legros, les Fantin-Latour, les Gaillard, les Rodin, les Roty, etc. Mais cette méthode, chez nous, reste néanmoins un peu exceptionnelle ; elle est en dehors des habitudes des écoles et des Académies. Au Japon il semble que ce soit la règle. Ce peuple d'observateurs attentifs et réfléchis est habitué de bonne heure à regarder et surtout à savoir regarder et à retenir. À voir l'ensemble des aquarelles de M. Markino on peut constater à quel point le sens de l'observation et de la mémoire est développé chez lui. Il y a loin sans doute de ces jolies images finement nuancées aux glorieuses visions puissantes et tendues d'un Méryon, ou aux compositions d'un pittoresque si vigoureusement expressif d'un Lepère. Le Paris de M. Markino n'est, d'ailleurs, pas le Paris des vieux quartiers. Il n'y a là rien qui puisse éveiller son imagination dans ces vestiges d'un passé qu'il ne connaît pas. Il n'a pas, comme Lepère ou comme Méryon, fait parler les vieilles pierres. Son Paris est le Paris moderne, aux grands boulevards violemment éclairés par les projecteurs électriques des annonces lumineuses, aux voies sillonnées d'autos ou de trams, aux ponts de fer dont les larges fermes enjambent la rivière, aux gares qui arrondissent dans la nuit leurs vastes halls illuminés. Tout cet appareil de construction moderne l'amuse, et il en tire des combinaisons tout-à-fait décoratives avec une ingéniosité véritable de japonais qui sait toujours se placer à l'endroit voulu. Rien n'est spirituel



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS

comme la coupe de ses petits tableaux, comme le motif qu'il aura choisi. S'il s'installe Place S. Sulpice, au lieu de se laisser émouvoir par la façade grandiose de l'église ou par la majesté architecturale de la fontaine qui porte les statues des quatre grands prélats de France, c'est un simple détail de cette fontaine avec un coin de cette place qu'il choisira dans l'ombre de la nuit : un des lions accroupis en face d'un reverbère qui l'éclaire vivement. De l'auguste silhouette de la Madeleine, qui dresse ses deux frontons sur son peuple de colonnes, il ne prend qu'un bout d'escalier de marbre avec sa rampe en bronze, que dominant au loin les cimes des marronniers jaunies et les toits d'ardoise bleue. Du pont de la Concorde on ne voit guère que les piles rondes surmontées de leur couronnement cubique, émergeant de l'ombre et de l'eau striée de moires lumineuses. Le simple point de vue où il se place est d'un imprévu continuel.

Le livre de M. Yoshio Markino pourrait, à ce titre, servir de manuel pour montrer comment il faut s'appréhender à voir, afin de savoir découvrir l'intérêt qu'ils renferment dans les objets qui en semblent les plus dénués en apparence et dans les aspects qui paraissent les moins propres à servir de sujets à l'art. Les étrangers y trouveront les souvenirs du Paris vivant et brillant qu'ils connaissent ; les Parisiens y goûteront l'esprit, la verve, la légèreté et, en même temps, l'impression finement émue de cet hôte venu de très loin, qui a si joliment rendu les caractères les plus nouveaux de cette capitale unique dont ils sont filialement orgueilleux, parce que, lui aussi, il en a senti la grandeur, la beauté et, surtout, le

## PRÉFACE

charme. Ce livre constitue, en plus, pour nous comme un petit événement artistique qu'il n'est pas indifférent de noter, car il est un des premiers documents qui valent la peine d'être retenus pour fixer, dans l'histoire de l'art japonais, le point de départ d'une évolution nouvelle.

LÉONCE BÉNÉDITE.

PARIS,  
*Août 1908.*



# CONTENTS

Préface by L. Bénédicté v

An Essay by the Artist xxv

## I. Of the Colour of Paris I

Public Buildings—View from Notre Dame—Altar of the Boatmen—  
Notre Dame de Paris—The City of Charles Martel—The Sainte  
Chapelle—The old Louvre—The Place Royale in the Seventeenth  
Century—The Pantheon, a Temple of Fame—Modern Exhibition  
Buildings

## II. Of Open Spaces 28

Pleasure Grounds, Walks, Squares, Parks, and Gardens—The Champs  
Elysées—The Quays—The Luxembourg Gardens—The Buttes  
Chaumont—The Bois de Boulogne and Vincennes—Père Lachaise  
—The Gobelins Quarter

## III. Of the Faubourgs : The Working Class 58

Morning Influx from Montmartre and Belleville—Street-sweepers  
and Milkmen—Working Girls—The Midday Lunch—The Un-  
employed—Philanthropic Works—General Confederation of  
Labour—Popular Universities and Entertainments—Overcrowded  
Tenements

## IV. Of Politics and the Political World 84

Chamber of Deputies—Luxembourg Palace—The Senate—Hotel de  
Ville and Elysée Palace—Presidents of the Republic—Jules Grévy,  
Carnot, Faure, and Fallières—Clémenceau—Municipal Council—  
Federation of Labour

# THE COLOUR OF PARIS

## V. Of the Theatre 110

The Comédie Française—The Odéon—The Opéra—The Théâtre Antoine—The Renaissance—Actor-Managers—M. Guitry and Mme. Réjane—Theatre Hats—The Censorship—The Claque—A Triumph—The People's Theatre

## VI. Of Women in Paris 139

The Society Woman—Dressmakers—Visits—The Opera—The Races—Women at the Sorbonne—Literary Women—Feminists—Queens of the Theatre—Servants—A Foreigner's Opinion

## VII. Of Journalism 164

Historical Sketch—First French Newspaper—Commercial Journalism—The Interview—Decline of Criticism—Literature—The Académie Française—The Académie Goncourt

## VIII. Of Military Paris 184

A Cavalry Charge—Compulsory Service—The Garrison of Paris—Triumphs of the Army—A Page of History—The General Staff—The Army and Society—State of Opinion in the Army

## IX. Of Paris Finance 210

Historical Sketch—The Bank of France—"La Haute Banque"—The Rothschilds and Others—Vote on the Budget—Secret Service Funds—The Bourse—Shady Finance—The Great *Crachs*—The Panama Company

## X. Of Education and the Paris Schools 234

Elementary Teaching—The Beaux Arts—The Conservatoire—The Sorbonne—Popular Education—The Student of the Latin Quarter—The Great Schools—The College of France—Free Courses

## Index 261

# ILLUSTRATIONS

## *Coloured Plates*

Eiffel Tower in the Evening Mist	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Anglers on the Seine	<i>To face p. xxxj</i>
Back of Notre Dame: Moonlight	” 2
Saint Germain l'Auxerrois	” 7
Statue of Notre Dame de Paris in the Cathedral of Notre Dame	” 10
Back Entrance of St Roch	” 20
Rue du Haut Pavé; and Pantheon	” 24
Arc de l'Étoile	” 26
11.30 a.m. on a May Sunday at Boule- vard du Bois de Boulogne	” 30
Place de la Concorde	” 33
Bookstalls on the Seine Embankment	” 36
Sacré Cœur, seen from Rue de l'Abreu- voir	” 42
Lake in the Bois de Boulogne	” 46
View from Père Lachaise	” 50
View from Montmartre	” 58
The Man who feeds the Birds in the Tuileries Gardens	” 66
Kiosks in the Grand Boulevard	” 69

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS

Omnibus Station : Place St Germain des

Près	<i>To face p.</i> 72
Gare Montparnasse	77
Door of the Luxembourg Palace	84
Archives Nationales	90
Statue of Gambetta	94
Pont d'Iena	98
Bridge of the Chemin de Fer de l'Ouest	102
Place de la République	108
The Théâtre Français	113
East Side of the Opera	116
The Moulin Rouge	121
Corner of Rue des Blancs Manteaux and Rue des Archives	136
Boulevard de la Madeleine : Early Evening	138
Rue de Rivoli	144
Gardens of the Tuileries	148
The Madeleine	152
Boulevard Malesherbes	156
Market at Place de l'Alma	162
Pont Royal	166
Avenue Gabriel	172
Statue of Jeanne d'Arc	184
Esplanade des Invalides	192
Pont de l'Alma	196

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Gare d'Orléans: Pont Solférino	<i>To face p.</i> 200
Caumartin Station of the "Métropolitain"	" 202
Winged Victory, and Staircase of the Louvre	" 208
Place Vendôme	" 210
Eastward View from Pont Royal	" 211
Corner of Rue des Haudriettes and Rue des Archives	" 218
East Side of the Bourse	" 222
La Trinité	" 250

### *Sepia Drawings*

The Fountain in front of St Sulpice	" 18
Grand Palais	" 28
Boulevard des Batignolles	" 61
Café-Chantant in the Champs Elysées	" 123
Place du Théâtre Français	" 131
In Front of St Eustache	" 164
Evening at Pont Alexandre III	" 168
Pont de la Concorde	" 182
Pont Saint-Denis	" 198
Garden of the Observatoire	" 234
Boulevard St Michel	" 240
Café in the Rue Royale	" 253





## AN ESSAY BY THE ARTIST

**I**N June 1907, I was lying half unconscious on a bed of the West London Hospital after an operation, and counting the days until I could get up and enjoy myself by once more sketching London. Lo! a "sealed dispatch" came from my publishers. After a few weeks' time the doctor said to me at last, "Get up and go!" Impatiently I opened the dispatch and read thus: "Go to Paris and make sketches there." I had no time to cry, nor to laugh; but the train carried me away, and in eight hours' time I found myself in the "Gay City"—Paris. I myself felt as if a sea-water fish was put in the fresh water. The strange people, the strange tongue, the strange buildings, the strange effects! The latter two I began to make friendship with at once. I started to work from the very next day. My first cry was: "Who could paint London, but who could not paint Paris?" In London all objects are mystified into indescribable grey tones which need great study from those who wish to mix the colours to paint them; while in Paris, though we see many beautiful colours, they are the colours you can find ready on your palette. However, this first impression of mine soon disproved itself in the fact: Paris is just as difficult to paint

## AN ESSAY ON PARIS

as London. I have wasted many a sheet of paper—tearing away the half-finished sketches again and again.

I think Paris is feminine, while London is masculine. Whenever I compare Paris with London, those two artists, George Watts and Carrière, come into my mind. Generally, these artists painted subjects quite other than townscapes, but their colouring and handling represent so well the feeling of their own towns respectively—namely, Watts for London, and Carrière for Paris.

This was my first great change of scene since I have really devoted my life to being an artist. I was wondering which would be greater—loss or gain. I knew that I had learnt many new lessons since I went to Paris, but at the same time I felt that I had missed many things in London. This question could not be solved until I came back to London; then I realized that I had gained so much, practically with no loss at all.

I must confess that my art as well as my health suffered terribly for the first two months or so in Paris. When I arrived there, I went to a hotel in Boulevard Montparnasse. I did not like it. I could not stay there more than three weeks. I removed to a pension in the same district. Everything was in a quite different style from London lodgings. I began to be downhearted. I think I am like a cat which always prefers the place where he has stayed long. Every night I would go to bed with a miserable heart, and pass the whole night sleeplessly. How could I pass ten months under this condition? The next morning a heavy headache came, and I was quite unfit for the work. In the same pension there were

## BY THE ARTIST

an Irish artist and a young Danish lady art student with her mother. They were all very good friends to me—the Irish student trying to make me love Paris, and the Danish ladies trying to soothe me. But all was in vain. I wanted to come back to London at once, only my publishers would not allow me. At this moment, the very first persons I began to fall into love with were the French soldiers. I noticed at once that they never walk with girls as the English soldiers generally do; but, taking hand to hand with their own comrade, they would ramble about the *jardins*, or look at the bookstalls along the Seine. Their expressions are so innocent and so sincere. Their unfit and shabby uniforms only added to their sincerity by shaking off all possibility of conceited manner. They look really as if they are only doing their duties for their country. They reminded me of our country soldiers. I think the French soldiers resemble the Japanese soldiers very much. And also those dumpy trousers and rumpled overcoats, with the soft harmony of colours, are the most suitable subjects to put in the sketches. They are such good contrast with those French ladies who carry themselves wonderfully well, while their hats, their dresses, their boots—in shape as well as in colours—are most perfect, which seems to me their own speciality by birth. It was one of the pleasantest things for me to look at the ladies' fashions in Paris. But sometimes I wondered if they are not too anxious to show themselves, just like some lovable toy dolls disregarding to keep their own self-dignity, which seems to me the speciality of the Anglo-Saxon women from their birth.

## AN ESSAY ON PARIS

As the days were passing by, I began to observe many things in Paris. I noticed some most hideous sights—those so-called “Bohemians.” Being clad in dirty rags, and decorating themselves with all sorts of dust, they look exactly like Egyptian mummies. Are they poets? Are they artists? Are they too poor to keep themselves a little neater? Poets or artists are generally poor, as I am myself, but we can be neat without any more expense than it costs to be dirty. I think some of those Bohemians are the most conceited people in this world—far more conceited than those people who follow after the latest fashions. I know they have great ambitions to be looked upon as *quelqu'un*. If they are artists, why don't they become “somebody” by their own art? If they are poets, why don't they become *quelqu'un* with their own poems? Being too lazy to succeed by their own professions, they are trying to distinguish themselves by their hideous appearances. They are the traitors to true art.

While I was in that pension, a friend of mine came to show me “something very interesting for a change.” I went with him to the upstairs of some café. I cannot describe this room either with pen or brush. I leave it entirely to the imaginations of the readers. I said to myself, “Let the last day of Pompeii fall upon Paris at once!” My friend, seeing my unpleasant face, took me out of the door. A gentle breeze cooled away my hot cheeks with one brush after another. A dewy moon, like the ancient Japanese metal mirror, was hanging high above the sky. Was the moon moist, or were my eyes moist? I wiped my eyes with my handkerchief again and

## BY THE ARTIST

again, and the moon looked more and more dewy. Under this misty moon, clouds like fish-scales covered one-third of the sky, while above her silky white clouds were flowing in broken lines, as if some chiffon was thrown over it. The edge of one of these chiffon-clouds was touching the moon's face a little, very timidly. The street-lamps spread out very powerful lights—too strong for my eyes to describe their colours—and their reflections on the house-walls, pavement, and half-parts of the trunks of the boulevard trees, gave a greenish-grey colour which was divided from the sky by those dark roofs, forming a picture altogether neat and cool except for one or two kiosks which showed some warmest red, yellow, or amber light through their square windows. They were exactly like the signature stamps which we Japanese artists often put upon our pictures. What a perfect picture! I felt I was survived. My cursing words against Paris died away from my lips, and I said, “*Banzai* and *banzai* to Paris.”

My lonely pension life did not last long, for I was introduced through my illustrious English friend to two or three influential persons among the artistic circle in Paris. I may mention that one of these persons was M. Bénédict, of the Luxembourg Museum. He invited me every Saturday evening to his home, where I have met with several leading artists. Certainly it was the happiest moment for me to be among them. Only my reluctance was, I was so busy to do some certain sketches in the limited time, and could not visit them as often as I and they wanted.

## AN ESSAY ON PARIS

Another bright light came to my life at the same time. One of my English friends came to Paris to see me. He wanted to introduce me to his friend Mme. Y. Who is Mme. Y. ? He said she is a dressmaker. Delighted I was to be acquainted with a dressmaker, as it was my desire for a long time to study the ladies' fashions in Paris.

My friend and I drove across the river to the other side, and soon I arrived at one of the flats in Rue de Caumartin. There I was introduced to a charming French lady. Her first question was, How did I like Paris? Instead of answering her positively, which some hypocrites might do easily, I said I have had so many inconveniences in my daily life as I did not understand French, yet I could not spare times to learn the language. Mme. Y. took it with a great sympathy, and said as both she and her godchild spoke English, it would be best for me to live with them. She showed me a room which she could give me. I looked in. It had two windows with the north light. Its size, the gas and water system, and everything, were just right for my work. So I accepted her kind offer and removed there at once.

This was the beginning of my happy life in Paris. Mme. Y.'s god-daughter was a very simple and pathetic little child of fourteen. She was my interpreter whenever I went out. They looked after me for everything. Even my tobacco and tooth-powder they bought for me. My duty was only to paint. Some evenings madame would give me the lectures on the fashions. The way she makes dresses was just like the way I paint. When



ANGLERS ON THE SEINE





## BY THE ARTIST

some clients come to her, she would tell them, "Unless you leave everything to me, I cannot make any dress for you," and she would study their figures carefully, and ask them to wait for a day or two. These "a day or two" were the busiest time for her "to think out." Suddenly she would go to some theatre or restaurant, not to enjoy herself but to study the fashions. More than once I followed after her. It was a very interesting thing to hear her criticisms on the fashions, their "cutting" and "sawings" and "fittings," etc. It was a great amusement to watch how she turned some English or American ladies into the quite fashionable Parisians. One evening I was allowed to watch how she made her own hat. Piles of feathers and artificial flowers and chifions were laid on her table. In front of the looking-glass she put a skeleton hat on her head, and tried to decorate it with those stuffs on the table—one thing after another. She would say "Non, non!" until it came to the climax of such a good contrast of colour and good shape. Then a smile came to her face, and she sewed them up.

While I was watching that, she explained to me that all the materials cost her less than 20 francs, and she produced a hat valued over 100 francs. To her great disappointment, I was not appreciative enough about the lecture of money matters. Any lesson in economy is no good to me. But I was so much interested to see how well she understood about the colours. I think it is the natural gift of Frenchwomen.

I was told that all the so-called "gay life" in Paris

## AN ESSAY ON PARIS

was mostly for the foreigners, while the French people were very industrious and very practical. She proved her words with her own daily life. But I think the French were more matter of fact and less poetic than I expected. Anyhow, they are very intelligent and very sagacious people. If I compare the French and the English as chess-players, I should say that English players generally can see the next one or two hands in front, while the French players can see six or seven hands beyond. At the pension where I lived before, the porter had a little girl of six or seven. She used to play diabolò in the courtyard. One day I took some notes of her movements in my sketch-book—only three or four strokes of lines. If I show that to the landlord of my London lodging, he might say, "Are they trees or birds or some Japanese letters?" But that French porter looked at the note, and, to my great astonishment, he said: "Ah, oui, monsieur . . . justement ma fille. Ça, c'est très très bien!" The Parisians are good humourists and good jokers. Their jokes are as delicious as snail, but sometimes as strong as the garlic. An English dramatist—a great friend of mine—came to Paris last April. A box was given to us by the Vaudeville Theatre. Mme. Y., the English dramatist, and myself—the three different nations with the three different heads—went to see *La Divorcée*, which was so popular then. The English dramatist clasped his hand tightly and exclaimed again and again, "Splendid! splendid!" which was echoed and re-echoed on my lips. He said to me: "Can you tell me who could play as well in London?" I saw

## BY THE ARTIST

proudly brightened eyes in the French lady's face, and she was quite right, too. The play was about the questions which spring up from collisions between the sociology and biology and the artificial law and the superstitious religion, the latter having the least influence. As I am a follower of the Oriental philosophers, I was naturally much interested in this play, especially to see the French public accept it with such applause. It is very curious that whenever I meet my Japanese friends in London, the topic of our conversations is always about this question. So I have written down the outlines of this play, and sent it to my Japanese friends, now in Japan.

In many ways, I think, we Japanese are nearer to the French peoples than to the English peoples. This idea was proved only too true by my friend, who said to me the other day: "You always say England, England, and England, but you are not an Englishman at all. You are more like a Frenchman." But the great difference, as I noticed, is that French people seem to me eager to enjoy themselves by fulfilling their five senses freely, while the Japanese are always trying to sacrifice these senses in order to get more mental pleasures. Thus, in the peace-time our manners differ from each other; but if something happens, we are excited in the same way. For instance, such an incident as "Zola in the Panthéon," which happened just when I was in Paris, is quite a familiar thing in Japan.

There was only one thing I could not understand at all during my ten months' stay in Paris. It was about the

## AN ESSAY ON PARIS

relation of the different sexes. This is too great a question for a stranger to understand. Even in London, where I have been over ten years, I do not yet quite understand the English life. Such living human emotions never go parallel with any dead sciences or logics. Each nation has its own peculiarity ; and while one nation is indulging in a serious mood, the other would laugh at it.

Here is an example. One evening I went to Mme. Y.'s business-room to see those work-girls making dresses. They were taking their rest. It happened that I had an English paper in my hand, and Mme. Y. translated it into French for those girls. As is usual with this class of people, they were very much interested in the news of the "breach of promises." But no sooner than she had finished reading, they all burst into laughter. I asked them for curiosity : "What would they do if such a case ever happened to them ?" They all said : "Our hearts could not be cured by any amount of the damages ; we would take our lives." In England such suicide would be mocked at as "temporary insanity." I think that all we Japanese, not only the middle-class people but even the better-class people, would profoundly sympathize on the French side. But I must frankly express that I could not agree with everything that the French people do.

Paris had some mists, too, for my delight. Here is an extract from my diary : "*October* 20, 1907.—I had a promenade along Place de la Concorde, Boulevard Saint Germain, Boulevard Saint Michel, then to home. The

## BY THE ARTIST

winter has really come, and in the evening Paris is in her new dress, which is as chic as her fair dwellers' wear. That pearl-like water of Seine at the sunset time, and that greenish-white colour of the houses is gone—all changed into a mysterious grey. . . .”

When I got up next morning and walked out, everywhere I saw her winter dress.

Though Paris had the mists, yet she had the sun too. The morning is almost wonderful, for the sun's rays divide the space of the street into two with a diagonal line—the shadow side being all of a mauve-grey tone. Nothing can be seen in this region. The light gives a strong amber colour to the mist, and shows up white walls, gold letterings, red curtains, and everything wherever it touches.

I wish I could see the dead night-effects of Paris. But my friend warned me, telling some terrible stories of Apaches. But more than once, looking at the night-effects through my windows, I had great temptation to go out. My friend told me—if she were a “strong man,” she would take me out, but, being a woman, she was very much afraid. When I go to Paris next time, I think I shall find out a “strong man” to go out with.

My most favourite places in Paris were those “little bits” around the Sacré Cœur, and the districts between the Boulevard Sebastopol and the Bastille. I had never seen such old-fashioned streets before, except on the stage. The work-girls in this quarter never wear any hats; their bare heads are far more tasteful than those hideous black straw hats which the English girls often put on. The

## AN ESSAY ON PARIS

men, in their dampy trousers and sabots, make a very good balance to the bareheaded women. The men and women often carry very big bundles; under their weight they twist themselves to keep an equilibrium in a manner which is very picturesque. Whenever I was in this part, I always thought that I had gone back to some century of long ago. But, every now and then, gorgeous automobiles, with gorgeous people in them, would break these quiet streets at their full speed, as if to remind me of the up-to-date fashionable quarters near by.

Just before I left Paris summer came again, and I enjoyed myself seeing her in her summer dress once more.

The 23rd of June was the day I bid adieu to Paris. Although I was delighted to be back in my beloved London again, something always whispers in my ears "Paris and Paris," and she comes into my dreams nightly.

YOSHIO MARKINO.

LONDON,  
*July* 1908.

# THE COLOUR OF PARIS

## CHAPTER I

### Of the Colour of Paris

Public Buildings—View from Notre Dame—Altar of the Boatmen—Notre Dame de Paris—The City of Charles Martel—The Sainte Chapelle—The old Louvre—The Place Royale in the Seventeenth Century—The Pantheon, a Temple of Fame—Modern Exhibition Buildings

**W**HEN the clearer atmosphere of early spring begins to admit of a more distant prospect, I often ascend the towers of Notre Dame, from whence surely, if from any point, the Colour of Paris—of Paris the city and the historic spot—is the most vividly to be discerned. Here, at all events, we are at the very heart of the city, the centre round which it has grown up by degrees, from which it has spread out in ever-widening circles; from here can best be distinguished its many domes and spires, towers and cupolas, all the buildings which record its eventful history. Some of these buildings have been erected upon the ruins of others yet more ancient; but vestiges of these older ruins remain to speak of an earlier past, and so chronicle two epochs in place of one.

Notre Dame, indeed, is still the centre of Paris. Here was the little island of Lutetia which Cæsar was forced to take by siege in his conquest of Gaul. Where now



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. I.]

extends the *parvis*, or cathedral square, rose in the first century B.C. the rude village of mud-huts in which our ancestors dwelt.

Under Roman rule civilization developed rapidly in Gaul, and Lutetia grew apace. It was already called the city of the Parisians—*civitas Parisiorum*—and the Altar of the Boatmen (*nautes*), a monument dating back to this period, still remains to us. This altar originally stood on the very spot where Notre Dame was afterwards built, and was rediscovered long after the erection of the great cathedral. On March 16, 1776, some workmen who were digging a vault beneath the choir to serve as a burial-place for the Archbishops discovered in the foundations of a very old wall running from north to south nine huge blocks of stone covered with carvings and inscriptions. These were recognized as being ancient altars, and one of them bore the following dedicatory inscription :

TIB. CÆSARE  
AUG. JOVI OPTUMO  
MAXIMO  
NAUTÆ PARISIACI  
PUBLICE POSIERU  
NT

“Under Tiberius Cæsar Augustus the Parisian Boatmen raised this altar, at the expense of their Corporation, to Jupiter the All-Great and All-Good.”

One side of the altar bears this inscription; the other three sides are adorned with rude carvings. Such is the first monument which speaks of Paris, and these *Nautæ Parisiaci*, whose business it was to transport produce and



BACK OF NOTRE DAME : MOONLIGHT



## CH. i.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

merchandise from the mouths of the Saone and Rhone down the Seine as far as the Channel and to the coast of Brittany, were our authentic ancestors. Their altar has been removed to the Roman baths in the Cluny Museum, and this ancient sculptured stone, if not the most beautiful, is at least the most venerable of the monuments of Paris.

As Lutetia developed, Augustus raised it to the rank of a city, and several of the Roman Emperors took up their residence there. Gradually the inhabitants, finding their islet too confined, crossed the stream and settled on its southern shore. The growth of the town at first was entirely in this direction, and its buildings rose on the slope of that hill between the Ile de la Cité and the Bièvre, called the Mountain of Ste Geneviève. Below the hill stretched the arena, the ruins of which were brought to light towards the close of the last century. During the first era of its history our city contained no more important edifice than this arena, which comprised both theatre and amphitheatre. On the flatsanded circle of the latter took place the gladiatorial combats and fights with wild beasts, while on a raised stage facing the seats, which occupied a hemicycle along the side of the hill, pantomimes and other scenic representations were given.

The entire population, including women and slaves, thronged hither on feasts and holidays, and beneath the great awning (*velum*), which sheltered the crowd from the heat of the sun, were sometimes gathered over twenty thousand spectators.

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. i.]

The Thermæ, or Roman baths, remains of which are recognizable within the Cluny gardens, evoke memories of another splendid monument of the same period—the aqueduct of Auteuil, built originally to lead the waters from Rungis to supply the baths of Lutetia. These baths were adorned at the angles of the vaulted roof with prows of boats, symbolizing the prosperity of the city, for which reason the prow of a ship has remained through all ages the emblem of Paris.

In the Ile de la Cité itself arose somewhat later the Palace of the Cæsars, which was also the residence of the Governors of the city. Before the palace stretched the Forum, which served as a public square and market. The remains of a great edifice discovered in the last century beneath the Sainte Chapelle are probably vestiges of the Palace of the Cæsars. The town had spread very little along the north bank of the stream, and all that immense space covered with houses which can be seen from the towers of Notre Dame stretching between the Seine and the heights of Belleville, was then covered with dense woods and morasses, intersected already by three great Roman roads, one leading towards the northern provinces—our Rue St Denis of to-day, where traces have been discovered of the old Roman pavement; another towards Seulis, Soissons, and Rheims, our Rue St Martin; and a third in the direction of Sens, now Rue St Antoine. Wooded hills bordered the horizon, and on the highest of these stood two temples, dedicated to Mars and Mercury. This hill is now known as Montmartre.

## CH. I.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

These ancient monuments, which lend a tinge of Gallo-Roman colouring to the story of Paris, are little known to Parisians. We do not pay due homage to our earliest ancestors, those brave Paris boatmen, worshippers of Jupiter, Christian traditions having thrown them into the shade. From the fourth century onwards Christianity had spread by degrees over the whole of Gaul. Christian art emerged from the catacombs to impart its own sacred colour to the era which saw churches and cathedrals rising on every hand. The ancient islet on which the boatmen had planted their altar was singled out by the Bishops in their turn. There rose the first church which really deserved the name of cathedral of Paris. It was originally dedicated to St Stephen, and traces of its foundations were discovered in 1848 during excavations on the present site of the sacristy of Notre Dame. This shrine was built about the year 366, and at the same time it was decided to surround the city with ramparts. In erecting these the newly-made Christians, yielding to their hatred of the ancient faith, demolished all the pagan monuments, especially the arena. Thus, with the same facility with which they had abandoned Druidism for the Roman rites, our ancestors threw over the Roman for the Christian form of worship.

Still looking down from the towers of Notre Dame, we see on the summit of Mont Ste Geneviève, beneath the shadow of the vast Pantheon, a massive discrowned tower bereft of its belfry. It was there that Clovis, having adopted the Christian faith, erected his castle, and

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. I.]

close beside it the basilica of St Peter and St Paul, which afterwards took the name of Ste Geneviève, whose ashes were there entombed. The Castle of Clovis was later transformed from a palace to a monastery, and became the abode of the Abbot of Ste Geneviève and his monks. Having been destroyed by the Normans, it was re-erected in 1177, the base of the old tower of Clovis dating from this period, while its upper stories belong to the thirteenth century. The old tower of Clovis is at present enclosed within the Lycée Henri VI.

Nearly all our old churches have shared the fate of the Abbey of Ste Geneviève, having been destroyed and then rebuilt. It was Childebert, founder of abbeys and churches and murderer of his kindred, who caused the erection, not far from the palace of the Thermæ, of the first basilica of St Germain des Près. The only vestige of this basilica of Childebert which still remains in the present church is, I believe, some marble shafts of columns, which were replaced in the choir in the twelfth century. The lofty tower, although its base is very ancient, does not appear to be of earlier date than the ninth century. The towers of Clovis and of St Germain des Près recall the sombre medieval colouring of the Merovingian epoch, during which Paris—it is by this name that the city had been called since the fourth century—had not ceased to expand and develop. Paris was no longer concentrated within the Cité. About the year 700 there had spread along the right as well as the left bank of the Seine numerous boroughs and suburbs grouped round their parent abbeys and churches, some



SAINT GERMAIN L'AUXERROIS





## CH. i.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

of them being surrounded by moats and walls, while towers and belfries began to rise on all sides.

Charles Martel, on his march through Paris in 719 in pursuit of Eudes, Duke of Aquitaine, first skirted the monastery of St Lawrence, on the site of which the church of the same name stands to-day, and soon arrived at the monastery of St Martin des Champs, a famous priory which has given its name to a whole region of Paris, and whose site is now occupied by the Conservatoire des Arts et Sciences. Charles Martel, then continuing his march, passed St Gervais on his left, and on his right the vast cemetery, later named after the holy Innocents, and the Church of St Germain l'Auxerrois, which dates back to the reign of Chilpéric, but was rebuilt in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. He next crossed the Seine and entered the Cité, passing on his left the Hôtel Dieu, a hospital founded about the middle of the seventh century by Landry, Bishop of Paris. Thence he crossed the other branch of the stream, stopping to gaze at the palace of the Thermæ, which still retained some traces of its ancient splendour, and surveying in turn the chapels and churches of St Severin, St Julien le Pauvre, and St Germain des Près. Finally, he climbed the mountain of Ste Geneviève, and descended its further slope to the little town of St Marcel, on the east, and the blooming shores of the Bièvre. Thus Paris had spread from north to south, as later it was destined to grow proportionately from east to west.

One of the most curious quarters of the Paris of that date, as well as one of the richest in old houses and old

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. I.

monuments, is undoubtedly that stretching along the hill of Ste Geneviève between the Seine and the Bièvre. No one has better described this district of Paris than our friend J. K. Huysmans. If we face towards the west from the towers of Notre Dame, our glance embraces all Paris; if, on the other hand, we turn our gaze to the east, we see only Notre Dame. We cannot see the prodigious façade, indeed, nor the soaring height of the twin towers, in whose architecture elegance, balance, and an indescribable lightness are combined with strength and massiveness. But we can see the nave, its acute triangle, the graceful and ornate crowns of its buttresses, the spire with its lace-like carving, and rising on all sides a throng of figures wrought in stone. The eye wanders hither and thither, uncertain where to rest, while there rises before the mind the impression of a visionary world.

This great work was the creation of two centuries, the first stone being laid in 1103; and it was not till 1351 that Jehan le Bouteiller put the finishing touches to the choir-screen, a masterpiece begun in 1319 by Jean Ravy, master-mason. No other Gothic edifice exhibits such perfect unity.

From the reign of Louis le Gros, King of France in 1108, to that of Napoleon I, Notre Dame has looked down upon our whole history. First she sheltered the life of medieval Paris, being its chief civic as well as its chief religious edifice. Here the people assembled, here slaves were enfranchised, mysteries and miracle-plays were performed, and the Feast of Fools was celebrated.

## CH. i.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

It was here also that men swore fealty at the altar, and here that they sought right of sanctuary. Merchants sold their wares within its precincts, and hither the people resorted to gaze at gorgeous missals inlaid with gold and richly illuminated, which were chained to the desks for safety. Crowds gathered here to behold novel and curious sights of every sort, from ostrich-eggs and elephants' tusks, stuffed crocodiles, and skeletons of whales, to antique vases and rare cameos. It was the medieval "town hall," serving alike as prætorium, exchange, and museum.

Towards the close of the Middle Ages the great church lost something of this popular character, and became a more secluded spot. It was here that St Dominic preached. Hither came Raymond VII, Count of Toulouse, in 1229, barefooted and clothed in a smock, to abjure his errors and seek absolution from the papal nuncio. Here St Louis deposited the crown of thorns recovered from the Holy Land; and here, in 1302, Philippe le Bel held the first meeting of the States General. In 1431 Henry VI of England was here crowned King of France, and five years later a *Te Deum* was sung on the same spot in celebration of the re-taking of Paris by the troops of Charles VII.

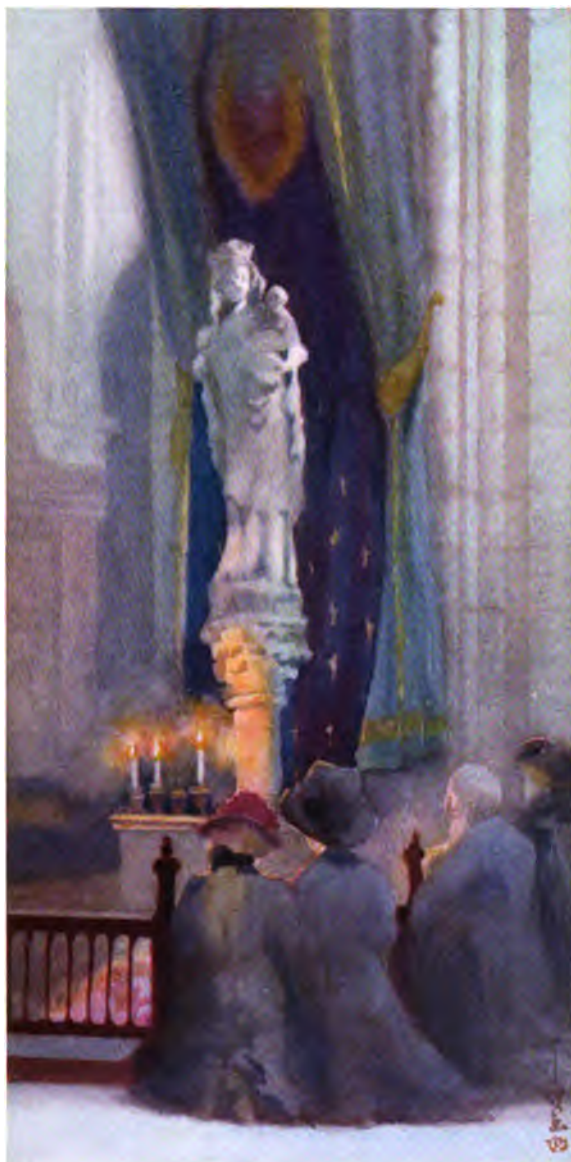
What a host of memories! How many episodes, sad and glorious by turn, these venerable stones could relate! Notre Dame served as barracks to the soldiers of the League until they were driven out by their infuriated opponents. Then, with the arrival of Henry IV, began a new period in the history of France, and the aisles of

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. I.]

Notre Dame resounded with pæans of victory and mournful chants of defeat, even as they were, yet later, to echo the funeral orations of Kings and the fiery eloquence of the Revolution.

All their miseries, all their splendours, all their strains of hope and lamentation, the populace of Paris have poured into the bosom of the ancient cathedral; and if the people still regard their church with a peculiar tenderness and veneration, it is for the memories its stones recall no less than for its intrinsic grandeur and beauty.

He who would see Notre Dame de Paris aright should visit it at evening, when its façade is lighted up by the rays of the setting sun. Although at that hour the base of its towers is already in shadow, all the countless figures that people the embrasures and niches of the portals can still be distinguished. Prophets, Kings, angels, apostles, virgins and saints, knights and ecclesiastics, ladies and serfs, the elect and the condemned, thronging to the Last Judgment—all these motionless figures of the past then seem animated with a mysterious life. The upper gallery lifts its fragile columns to the light, while between them the statues peer forth as though about to step down from their stone niches. Higher yet the great rose window, catching the direct rays of the setting sun, flashes with countless jewelled dyes and reveals its lace-like setting; and the two great towers, wreathed about with the fragile tracery of the upper gallery, mount upward to the light which enkindles them. Truly these are the colours befitting Our



STATUE OF NOTRE DAME DE PARIS IN THE CATHEDRAL  
OF NOTRE DAME



## CH. I.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

Lady of Paris, and in their radiance the great minster appears prodigious, vast, superhuman. One finds it hard to believe that it can be the work of man.

“The man, the artist, the individual, are lost in this massive pile without a maker’s name; the human mind is here summed up and epitomized. The people are its mason; Time is its architect.” Thus speaks Victor Hugo, the poet of Notre Dame de Paris.

Notre Dame marks the beginning of a new era, the greatest in our history from an architectural point of view.

The invasion of the Normans closed one epoch; another opens with the accession of Hugues Capet. Paris, destroyed by the invaders, rises like a phoenix from her ashes, and, already the centre of the Capetian rule, is about to become sole capital of the kingdom of France. The eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries behold the erection of the noblest monuments which the city can boast.

Louis IX found the people in possession of Notre Dame, and wished for a sanctuary of his own. The leading thought of his reign was to make war against the Mussulman and reconquer the Holy Sepulchre, and this explains the credulity with which he accepted and paid enormous sums for every relic offered him by a fallen and needy Prince, Baldwin II, last Latin Emperor of Jerusalem. These relics comprised the crown of thorns, fragments of the true Cross, the lance which had pierced the side of Christ, and the crimson mantle of the Passion; and it was in order to enshrine them worthily and



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. i.

to keep them always near him that St Louis ordered the erection of the Sainte Chapelle. The work was entrusted to Pierre de Montereau, a famous architect of the period, who succeeded in achieving in the three years between 1245 and 1248 the masterpiece which in its essential features has been preserved for us to the present day.

The originality of the edifice consists in its being in two stories. The new sanctuary was designed to serve a double purpose, as was the King's palace which adjoined it. This palace consisted of two distinct parts. The lower, including kitchens and dependencies, store-rooms and guard-houses, was more or less open to all comers; while the upper floor, containing the royal apartments and halls of State, was reserved for the King and his immediate following.

We know what a marvel was wrought by the architect in this upper chapel. On entering it, we see only a shell of translucent stained glass framed in clusters of light colonnettes, so that we look in vain for any support for the vaulted roof, which seems suspended in air. The explanation of this prodigy must be sought outside, where the immense buttresses show by what means the builder has sustained his roof. The gilded spire which crowns the chapel is not of the same style, and is a later addition to the *chef-d'œuvre* of Pierre de Montereau. Notre Dame and the Sainte Chapelle are enough to glorify for all time the little Ile de la Cité; but they are not its only architectural marvels. The palace of the Cité, first the abode of the Counts of Paris, and later of the first Capetian Kings, had risen upon the ruins of the

## CH. I.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

ancient palace of the Roman Governors, and was admirably situated at the western extremity of the island, from which it dominated both river-banks. Its position enabled Count Eudes to maintain himself for the space of two years against the Norman invaders. It was then a fortress; under Louis IX it became a palace. Enlarged by Philippe le Bel and restored by Louis XI, it continued to be the residence of the Kings until the time when, crossing the river, they installed themselves in the Louvre. The ancient abode of royalty was then surrendered to the judicial powers. Under the Kings its walls had witnessed many important events, such as the enfranchisement of the communes and the proclamation of the Pragmatic Sanction, the first protest against the authority of Rome. Transformed into a Palace of Justice, it remained, nevertheless, the scene and centre of all the most important events, whether civic or political, of the time. As we make the circuit of the existing buildings we shall be able to decipher the meaning of these venerable stones, in which we may find traces of every epoch.

The clock-tower at the corner of the Boulevard and the quay rises on the site of the old donjon of the palace, and recalls a dramatic moment in our history. In its belfry hangs the bell which gave the first signal for the massacre of St Bartholomew on the night of August 22 to 23, 1572. The stroke of one in the morning had just sounded from the beautiful clock under its canopy of fleur-de-lis when the signal was given. That hour has fled for ever; the Latin device upon the clock remains:

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. i.

"Dispense justice," it says to the magistrates, "as impartially as I myself do, distributing time among the hours."

Following the Seine, we come upon the great portals of the Conciergerie, by which one enters what were once the kitchens of St Louis, later turned into prisons. The round tower, called the Tour d'Argent, in which the treasury of the King was kept, is a little further on. Its twin tower close by was put to a more sinister use. It was called the "Bon Bec," in derisive allusion to the tortures inflicted there to unloose the tongue of the victims. The last tower, less high than the others, is built into the wall; it is the only one which was crenellated, and was called the Tower of Cæsar, having been erected on the foundations of a fort built by that conqueror. This succession of bastions, walls, and towers, bordering the river and facing the north, have kept for all time a sombre aspect such as befits the last relics of a feudal stronghold, thus lending their darker hues to the mural crown of the "City of Light."

More recent constructions have been added by degrees to the ancient ones, but these are less rich in memories and less characteristic in style. The buildings along the Quai des Orfèvres, parallel with the Quai de l'Horloge, offer no especial interest. The principal façade of the Palais de Justice, of recent construction (1776), borrows a certain dignity from the fine courtyard in front of it, and from the immense flight of steps leading to the entrance of the law-courts, down which pours incessantly a dark stream of humanity. This court of honour

## CH. i.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

was formerly called the Cour de Mai, on account of the privilege accorded to the lawyers' clerks of planting there annually on the first Saturday in May an oak selected for the purpose from the Forest of Bondy. Within its precincts, also, the public executioner branded criminals and burned all books which were condemned to the flames. During the Middle Ages a circle of fortifications completely surrounded Paris. Towards the end of the twelfth century there was added to this ring of walls a stronghold adjoining the ramparts on one side, while its other three sides commanded the adjacent country. This was constructed by Philip Augustus, about the end of the year 1191, upon the territory across the Seine already bearing the name of Louvre.

As we see the Louvre to-day the first thing that strikes us is its lack of unity. Nothing could be less homogeneous than this immense palace, whose innumerable parts belong to almost as many different styles and periods. Certain of these parts, however, are of extreme beauty, and the site of the palace on the shore of the Seine is unsurpassed. Of the Louvre of Philip Augustus nothing survives. The earliest buildings of the existing palace date only from the year 1546, when Francis I began to raze the ancient palace, intending upon its foundations to construct an edifice in the new style of the Renaissance, then beginning to prevail in France. The marvellous age of the cathedrals was over, and Paris began to transform itself. The letters appointing Pierre Lescot architect of the new Louvre are dated from Fontainebleau. Pierre Lescot was then thirty-six

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. i.

years of age ; he began by securing the co-operation in his great work of Jean Goujon, a sculptor of genius.

Of the plan which he had conceived—that of a quadrangular palace surrounding a courtyard, which plan was modified from century to century by his successors—we have only that part of the interior façade on the west extending from the clock pavilion to the south-west corner. All the sculptures on this side pass for the work of Jean Goujon. Under Francis II Pierre Lescot was superseded, and his plan set aside by Catherine de Medicis, who confided to architects of her own choosing the construction of the series of wings which still remain, and which are quite destitute of order or symmetry. The façade which opens to the east upon the Garden of the Infanta is not devoid of elegance, but presents already a striking contrast to the structure we owe to Pierre Lescot.

Henry IV ordered the construction of the whole mass of buildings overlooking the Seine, and formerly connecting the old Louvre with the Tuileries. Louis XIII subsequently resumed the work around the quadrangle. According to Pierre Lescot's plan, this court was to have covered barely a quarter of the space it occupies to-day. The new King having decided to enlarge his palace, his architect, Lemercier, respecting the work of his predecessors, conceived the excellent idea of faithfully reproducing the building of Pierre Lescot, and uniting the new edifice with the old by a central block. This architect also adopted the plan of repeating the same façade on the four sides of the court in similar style to the

## CH. i.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

first one, and with a vestibule with columns in the centre of each façade. Such is the plan of the admirable architectural ensemble which we see to-day from the square court of the Louvre, of which only the first block was finished by Lemercier. On the accession of Louis XIV he desired to complete the Louvre as planned by Henry II and Pierre Lescot. The chief difficulty of this enterprise consisted in devising a monumental façade worthy at once of the greatness of the palace and the greatness of the sovereign. Recourse was had to a general competition of all the leading architects. It was not, however, the most celebrated among them who won the day. Claude Perrault, who created the great colonnade of the Louvre which faces the Church of St Germain l'Auxerrois, was a physician by profession and an engineer on occasion. The chief defect of this famous colonnade is that it does not harmonize in any respect with the prevailing style of the Louvre. It must be admitted, however, that this defect is of minor importance, since the exterior façade adorned by this colonnade can only be seen apart from the rest of the edifice.

The Louvre was now complete, though later additions were made, especially under the First and Second Empires, to the two lateral wings which were to connect it with the Tuileries. Under Louis XIV similar work had been carried out in that part of the structure bordering on the Seine. Under Napoleon III it was undertaken and completed along the Rue de Rivoli.

Crossing the river from the Cité, we have proceeded directly to the Louvre, and the Louvre has brought us

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. I.

down from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century. We must now retrace our steps.

We have spoken of the Palace of the Thermæ, a relic of the Gallo-Roman era in Paris. By the thirteenth century it was already in ruins, and towards the middle of the fourteenth these ruins were purchased by Pierre de Chalus, Abbot of Cluny. The wealthy lords belonging to this abbey had, in fact, decided to build an hotel adjoining their college. This project, however, was not carried into execution for half a century, and even when at last begun, in 1456, it was interrupted from 1485 to 1490, and only brought to completion in 1500. The architect of this marvel remains unknown; what we clearly perceive is that he was able to emancipate himself from the prevailing traditions and from the severely religious character of Gothic art. His crenellated wall upon the street, his tower and turrets, retain some touch of the severity of the past; but the openwork balustrade of the main edifice, the belfries, the ornate gargoyles and delicately sculptured friezes, stamp upon the work the date of that charming period when art became more finely tempered and more graceful.

In the interior of the hotel the apartments have preserved little or nothing of their original decoration. The chapel alone, with its one octagon pillar supporting the vaulted roof, retains its primitive character. Of the sixteenth-century stained-glass windows only one remains, representing Christ bearing the cross.

We must descend the Seine, cross the Ile de la Cité, and traverse the further branch of the river, to find



THE FOUNTAIN IN FRONT OF ST. SULPICE





## CH. i.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

another edifice which, although very different in character, belongs to the same period. The Tour St Jacques is all that remains of the ancient Church of St Jacques de la Boucherie, named, according to Michelet, after "the parish of butchers and usurers, of money and meat. . . . Fitly surrounded by slaughter-houses, tanneries, and low resorts, this foul but rich parish extended from the Rue Trousse Vache to the Quai des Peaux."

This church is mentioned for the first time in a Bull of the year 1119. Four hundred years later, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the clock-tower was still unfinished. Great efforts were then made; the faithful were called upon for contributions; the King lent his aid; and about 1510 the tower, of which the foundations had been laid two years previously, finally attained the height of one story. In 1535 its bells were rung for the accession of Francis I. A carver of images, named Rault, had just finished for the summit of the tower the four-winged statues of the eagle, the lion, the ox, and the man-angel, which, according to Victor Hugo, "seem like four sphinxes offering old Paris as a riddle to be guessed by the Paris of to-day." Above these four symbolic figures the carver of images had erected the colossal statue of St James the More. The city has preserved two other edifices of the sixteenth century, due to the fortunate collaboration of Pierre Lescot and Jean Goujon. The Fountain of the Innocents, if it has lost its first architectural form, has at least preserved its admirable sculptures, those figures of naiads

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. i.

which Jean Goujon seems to have called forth from the depths of cool springs and flowing streams. Both worked on the Carnavalet, and the masterpieces they achieved there, as well as the subsequent sojourn of Mme. de Sévigné, have contributed to make this old hotel famous. There are still to be seen those great bas-reliefs of the seasons, of fame, and of the two lions—gems of art which alone would have sufficed to immortalize the sculptor of the Louvre.

Paris continued to expand. Originally her population had spread from the Cité along the south bank of the Seine; now a contrary movement set in. Under Philip Augustus the walls included nearly as much space on the north as on the south. In the succeeding centuries the city spread northward, and it was in order to enclose the territory gained on this side that Etienne Marcel built a new wall. During the reigns of Henry II, Charles IX, and Henry III the city spread continuously, no longer from the north to south, but along the right bank of the Seine and towards the west. The wall which had ended a little beyond the Louvre, where the Pont du Carrousel now stands, was carried further down, past the Château of the Tuileries to the spot occupied to-day by the Place de la Concorde. The Faubourg St Germain, however, was merely enclosed by a moat outside the old wall of Philip Augustus. This moat stopped at the point now bounded on the west by the Rue des Saints Pères, while a fort marked the extreme limit of Paris on the east.



BACK ENTRANCE OF ST. ROCH



## CH. I.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

We have seen what now remains of the Paris of that epoch.

In the seventeenth century edifices of all sorts multiplied, but none of them are architecturally as characteristic nor historically as important as those two great national monuments, Notre Dame and the Louvre. Each quarter of the city constructed its own churches, and the Kings, who either from taste or necessity indulged in frequent changes of residence, now erected palaces outside the city. Moreover, during the seventeenth century architecture began to show the first signs of decadence as an art—a decadence from which it has not recovered in our own day—and Paris, which from the twelfth to the sixteenth century had seen the construction of so many architectural marvels, continued to build new edifices from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century without enriching herself with a single masterpiece.

But although nothing of first-rate importance was added, Paris preserved through the seventeenth century an assemblage of buildings—one might almost say an entire quarter—surpassingly rich in memories. During the long reign of Louis XIII all Paris lived in the Place Royale.

On this site stood originally the Hôtel des Tournelles, one of the marvels of old Paris. From the beginning of the thirteenth century the Valois had made it their favourite residence. It was a unique structure, blending the genius of the Middle Ages with that of the Renais-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. i.]

sance. It was not a palace, but a series of palaces. Within its circle of walls the Tournelles included four chapels, seven gardens, a labyrinth, several hotels, and two immense parks. On July 10, 1551, Henry II died there, in consequence of a wound inflicted in an unlucky tournament, and his widow felt called upon, in token of her despair, to order the hotel to be completely demolished. "On that day," it has been truly said, "France lost her Alhambra." The destruction was not consummated until the year 1604; and in 1605 Henry IV was persuaded by his minister Sully to order the creation of the Place Royale.

The plan was not devoid of originality. Around a square enclosure were erected four rows of buildings on a uniform model, the second story being supported on a series of arcades forming a long corridor. The diversity of materials employed, comprising bricks and hewn stone, slate and lead, an innovation peculiar to the masonry of this period, gives to the tricoloured mass a peculiarly animated aspect, while the residences of the King and of the Queen, facing each other on the two principal façades, serve by their height and more ornate surface to break the uniformity of the ensemble.

Finished during the minority of Louis XIII, the Place Royale was inaugurated on March 16, 1612, by a tilting-match, in which the Queen Regent took part, and no sooner had the knights departed and the decorations been removed than the Place became at once the rendezvous of people of quality. It was also the chosen scene of many famous encounters, of duels in which two

## CH. i.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

or even three pairs of combatants took part, and its pavement was often stained with blood. It became, in short, the centre of Paris. Here was the arsenal of the Fronde, which furnished weapons against Mazarin in politics and against Scudéry in literature. The Place Royale, despite its name, thrilled with delight when the Grande Mademoiselle turned the cannon of the Bastille against the royal troops. It applauded Corneille; it applauded Condé. The Princesse de Guéménée, who was the soul of the Fronde, dwelt at no. 6, where in later times Victor Hugo was to hold the high court of romanticism. The staircase of no. 9, which led to the apartments of Marion de Lorme, has seen all the celebrities of Paris ascend its steps.

And as such a centre always exercises great attractions, the whole quarter which surrounded it—the quarter of the Marais—also contained a large proportion of famous personages. Close by lived Scarron, the madcap jester of his time, martyr and clown in one, with Mdle. d'Aubigné to do the honours of his house—she who was soon to be known as Mme. de Maintenon. Next door M. Desmarets received the forty immortals of the first Academy. A little further on the Marquise de Sévigné welcomed at her *petit lever* M. le Cardinal de Retz and the author of the Maxims, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld. The Marquise had for a near neighbour the lady by whom her husband and son had successively been snatched from her, and whom she jestingly called her daughter-in-law, Anne de Lenclos, an epicurean, of whom St Simon said that “Frailty beside



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. i.]

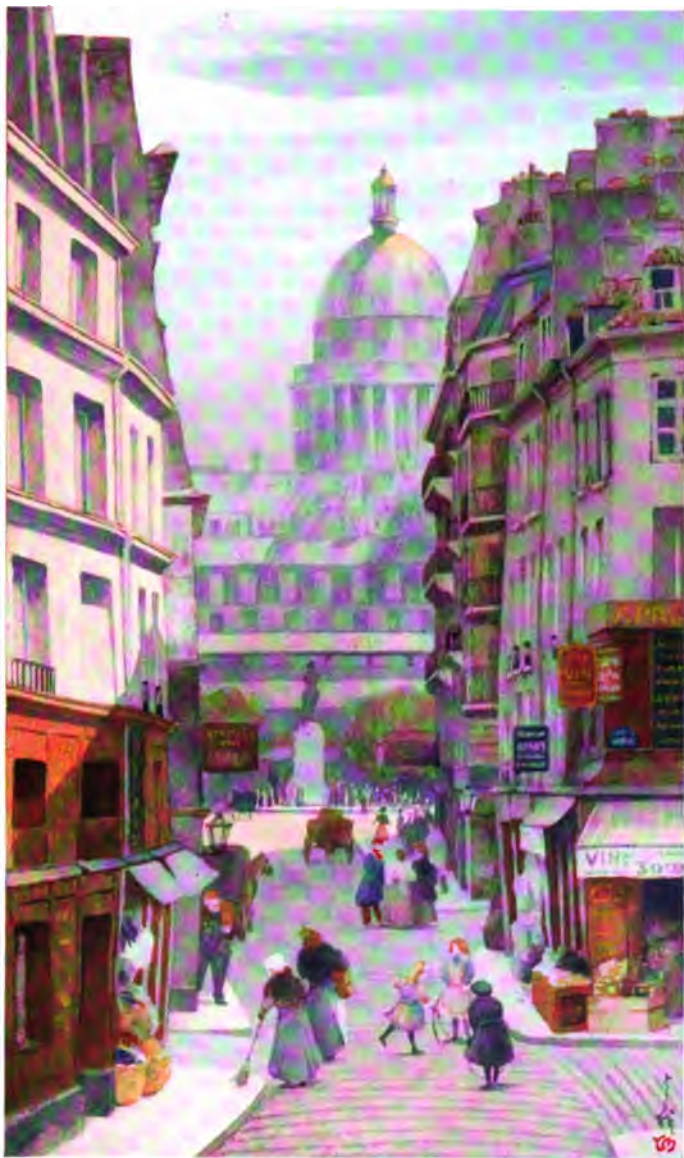
Ninon looks virtuous and full of probity." Yet La Bruyère found in Ninon's salon the material for his *Caractères*, and Molière read his *Tartufe* there.

The Place Royale and the Marais are an epitome of our seventeenth century. They are far more bound up with our history and evoke more thronging memories than even those *ex-votos* of the period, the Porte St Martin and the Porte St Denis.

To the south-east of Paris, but on the farther side of the Seine, the manufactory of Gobelin tapestry has preserved almost intact its seventeenth-century character. A whole series of historical edifices date from the same era—the Palace of the Luxembourg, the Church of the Sorbonne, the hospitals of Val de Grace, the Observatory, the Palace of the Institute, the Churches of St Gervais and St Protais, that of St Louis en l'Île, of St Nicolas du Chardonnet, of St Paul and St Louis, of St Roch, St Sulpice, and St Eustache.

The Hôtel des Invalides, by right of its situation alone, constitutes one of the noblest ornaments of Paris. As one sees it from the Champs Elysées at the end of the magnificent vista formed by the Avenue and Pont Alexandre and the Esplanade, with its sombre façade, its lofty portal, and the gleam of its golden dome, the perspective is unique; while seen from the Place Vauban its effect is, perhaps, equally grand.

Among the monuments erected in Paris in the course of the eighteenth century, the Pantheon is the most remarkable. When the project was formed of building a church dedicated to Ste Geneviève, the shepherdess of



RUE DU HAUT PAVÉ; AND PANTHÉON



## CH. I.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

the Middle Ages who delivered Paris from famine and the invader, the plans were submitted to a public competition, and that of the architect Soufflot carried the day. In accomplishing his task Soufflot seems to have entirely overlooked both church and saint. An architect before all things, his mind was haunted by grandiose reminiscences of St Peter's in Rome, St Paul's in London, and the cupolas of Mansard. He wished to create something greater than these, and accordingly he dared greatly.

The building, when finished, bore no resemblance to a church, and during the remaining years of the old régime the question was constantly debated to what divinity such an altar could be dedicated.

"Placed above Paris," writes Edgard Quinet, "and relegated to a remote suburb near the walls, one might have thought it a temple lost in the desert. Who revealed the true purpose of this enigma in stone? What gave it its true name? The French Revolution. To this end it was necessary that Mirabeau should die. On April 4, 1791, in face of the mighty dead, the Constituent Assembly came to a magnanimous decision. They sought around them where to lay the still-warm ashes of their great orator, and, raising their eyes to the Mount of Geneviève, the Assembly perceived, without any doubt or hesitation, that here indeed was the temple of Fame. Enthusiasm supplied the place of artistic sentiment, and revealed to them what had escaped the architect himself: that he had prepared in advance a fitting home for the illustrious dead and a shrine to a

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. i.

hitherto unknown divinity—Liberty. In a transport of civic ardour, the Assembly bestowed upon this monument a name and a meaning, and called it the Pantheon.”

And further on Quinet sums up the effect produced by the edifice in these words:

“The principal beauty of the Pantheon is to have Paris at its feet, and thus to offer itself to the people as a perpetual spectacle.”

A little lower down the slope of the hill is a small building, “which stands,” according to Michelet, “as a lighthouse for all Europe”—that is, the College of France.

The Palais Bourbon (Chamber of Deputies), the Palais de l’Elysée, and those twin hotels built by Gabriel on the Place de la Concorde, which are now the Mint and the School of Medicine, belong likewise to the eighteenth century. I must also point out a more modest and certainly less well-known structure, the fountain of the Rue de Grenelle, erected in 1739 by Bouchardon, architect and sculptor, at the request of the Provost of the Guilds. The small bas-reliefs of the four seasons are *chefs-d’œuvre* of the period.

The nineteenth century opens by adding its martial hues to the Colour of Paris and elevating a monument to the glory of our arms—the triumphal Arc de l’Étoile, dedicated by Napoleon I to the Grand Army. To Paris, however, it recalls, not only the wars of conquest, but also the war of emancipation; for this same edifice, of which an Emperor had laid the corner-stone in 1806, beheld forty-two years later, on April 26, 1848, the



ARC DE L'ÉTOILE



## CH. I.] THE COLOUR OF PARIS

Provisional Government of the Republic distributing its banners to the National Guard. This stately monument boasts also of Rude's immortal work, the *Marseillaise*.

Neither the Bourse, which dates from the beginning of the century, nor the Vendôme Column, nor the triumphal Arc du Carrousel, are remarkable structures; but at the foot of the Column of July strides Barye's noble lion, monstrous and strong. The Dance by Carpeaux gives distinction to the façade of the opera, while the façade of the Hotel de Ville is a sufficiently exact reproduction of that of the original building destroyed by fire in 1871. The Trocadéro is a memorial of the great Exhibition of 1878, while that of 1889 survives in the Tour Eiffel and the Gallery of Machines, masterpieces of the art of the modern engineer.

Our most recent palaces, erected for the Exhibition of 1900, on the Avenue Alexandre III, which should have given repose to the eye and mind by the harmony of their general structure and the stately calm of their colonnades, offer to the gaze only discordant lines, overloaded ornament, and an accumulation of meaningless statues. However, if the critic cannot pardon the Grand Palais for its composite architecture and its railway-station roof, he may accept with greater indulgence the admirable arrangement of the interior, which makes the Petit Palais a model museum.



## CHAPTER II

### Of Open Spaces

Pleasure Grounds, Walks, Squares, Parks, and Gardens—The Champs Elysées—The Quays—The Luxembourg Gardens—The Buttes Chaumont—The Bois de Boulogne and Vincennes—Père Lachaise—The Gobelins Quarter

**I**N the area of its public gardens and squares, those ornaments of a city which serve at the same time as its lungs, Paris is not to be compared with London ; in fact, the latter has the advantage by over 7,000 acres. In Paris, buildings are encroaching so rapidly on the open spaces left that within the last century the city has lost two-thirds of its gardens, public and private ; and the dispersion of the religious orders will result, in the near future, in the disappearance of many of the most beautiful of those gardens which yet remain, and the erection on their site of factories and commercial buildings. These latter gardens, to be sure, were not accessible to the public, but such oases of freshness and verdure scattered over the city served as breathing-spaces and purified the air. Their suppression is compensated in a measure by the widening of the streets and boulevards, and the destruction of most of the dark, noisome alleys of old Paris. It remains to be seen whether these new avenues, laid out by line and planted with rows of trees, can give the same freshness to the air as the groves and flower-gardens of the past.

The steady increase in the population is attended by a proportionate increase in the number of vehicles, which



GRAND PALAIS



## CH. II.]            OF OPEN SPACES

facilitate transit, but also serve to make circulation within a certain radius more difficult.

This question of open spaces gives justifiable concern to hygienists, who are discussing the use that can be made of the vast extent of territory covered by the old fortifications. Unfortunately the solution of this problem is not left in their hands; the disposal of the land is of equal interest to speculators, who seem little inclined to relinquish their prey. So Paris, after all, having merely loosened one girdle of stone to assume another, her population will gain little by being no longer shut in by the old walls of Philip Augustus.

In fact, we have but to reflect that two hundred years ago 15,000 people had a space for free circulation more than double that occupied by their dwellings, while this proportion is now reduced by more than two-thirds for the 2,700,000 inhabitants of modern Paris.

And this observation does not apply merely to the densely thronged faubourgs, but is equally true of certain central quarters of the city, where there is allotted to each inhabitant barely the 2 square metres which are the measure of his grave.

M. Eugène Hénard, author of some remarkable studies on the transformations of Paris, reckons at 247 hectares the amount of space left open to the people within the city limits. Many of these promenades, however, make up in beauty what they lack in extent, and such ornaments of the city as the Champs Elysées, the Bois de Boulogne, the Tuileries, the Luxembourg, and the quays,

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ii.

might rouse envy in the most luxurious and splendid capitals.

The Champs Elysées, scarcely 2 kilometres in length from one triumphal arch to the other—from the Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel to the Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile—is one of those choice spots in Paris where grandeur of perspective harmonizes with deeply stirring memories. This wide avenue, a fitting scene for great pageants and popular uprisings, has had its full share of both. But while illuminations and public rejoicings can add little to its charm and colour, the shadows in the picture lend a deeper touch to its magnificence and magic spell.

On a fine Parisian Sunday, at the hour when the gay throngs returning from the races at the Bois de Boulogne fill the avenue with an unceasing stream of brilliant equipages and automobiles, there is little to call up before the imagination those memorable days when great historic dramas were unrolled upon this unrivalled stage.

Here, for instance, on a stern wintry day, passed the cortège bringing back the mortal remains of Napoleon I. from his grave at St Helena. Later it was the road followed by the battalions of the National Guard on their way to swear allegiance to the Republic; and a short time after, Prince Louis Napoleon pursued this path in the reverse direction, attended by an escort of cuirassiers, when he made his entrance into the Tuileries.

On another occasion, towards the close of the Second Empire, the crowd, which was usually confined to the side-walks, overflowed the roadway in a torrent, threaten-



11.30 A.M. ON A MAY SUNDAY AT BOULEVARD DU BOIS DE BOULOGNE



ing to carry everything before it. This was on their return from the funeral of Victor Noir, who had been killed by Pierre Bonaparte, when the excited populace, led by Rochefort, and singing the *Marseillaise*, was arrested in its tumultuous rush towards Paris and towards a republic by a force of police and cavalry barring the Champs Elysées opposite the Palais de l'Industrie.

It was an ominous moment. A sudden movement in the crowd, a cry, a shot fired on one side or the other, as in December, 1851, and the Empire might have swept the Champs Elysées from end to end with artillery-fire, as it had once swept the boulevards, thus repeating "that somewhat rude police measure" to which it owed its eighteen years of security.

The *Palais de l'Industrie* recalls, without inspiring regret, one of the triumphs of the Imperial régime, the Universal Exposition of 1855. A more unsightly jewel-case for the treasures it held can hardly be imagined, especially as the case was left to us after the jewels had vanished. Pulled down in 1900, it was advantageously replaced by the *Grand* and *Petit Palais*, whose collections are at least permanent.

The last imposing spectacle witnessed on the Champs Elysées took place in 1885. On May 31 of that year Victor Hugo's coffin was placed beneath the Arc de Triomphe, where it lay in state until the following day, when Paris, in the name of France, escorted to the Pantheon the greatest of her poets. It was fitting that the author of the Odes to the Column and the Arch of Triumph should once more make his countrymen forget



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. II.

for a moment that foreign armies had bivouacked in the Champs Elysées in 1814, 1815, and 1871, and that the Cossacks, the English, and the Germans had tethered their horses by turns to the old trees of its side-alleys. But who thinks now of these things when dining beneath the dense foliage, hung with lights, which forms a natural awning to its restaurants and *café-concerts*?

These are Ledoyen, l'Horloge, l'Alcazar d'Été, les Ambassadeurs, the former Cirque de l'Impératrice, and the Jardin de Paris—peep-shows and pot-houses on a grand scale, whose frequenters bear a family likeness to the public of the Square Marigny, with its Punch-and-Judy show for children, its rocking-horses and goat-carriages, its donkeys and tilting-rings. But the Champs Elysées, though open to carting and heavy traffic as far as the *rond-point*, has by no means become a promenade for the common people.

A charming verse-writer, Charles Cros, writing just after the war of 1870, thus describes the modest diversions of a family of employés :

“ Enfin, ce soir, après la soupe,  
Ils iront autour de Musard,  
Et ne rentreront pas trop tard,  
Afin que demain l’ou s’éveille  
Pour une existence pareille. . . .”

This remains true for the intermediate class between the populace and the well-to-do bourgeois. Every summer evening, the establishments which have succeeded Musard's concerts and balls draw together an audience, composed, not of working men, but of em-



PLACE DE LA CONCORDE



ployés, and even small proprietors, who are content with such faint snatches of music and song and such twinkling of lights as reach them through the intervening foliage, and these groups, gathered beneath the electric globes, look like little clusters of night-moths or flies drawn within the circle of a lamp.

The Place de la Concorde, before becoming a glittering necklace on the breast of Paris, was the iron collar which the Revolution hung about the neck of Royalty, and later about its own.

Between the entrance of the Champs Elysées and the statue of Liberty, which replaced that of Louis XV, fell the heads of Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, Charlotte Corday, the Girondins, the Hébertists, Danton, and Robespierre.

Strange to relate, nothing commemorates these bloody sacrifices on the Place, called by antiphrasis the Place of Concord. Instead, the obelisk of Luxor, in the midst of a group of the cities of France, perpetuates the memory of Rameses II. If little remains of the magnificent garden laid out, not far from here, by Lenôtre, who traced the line of the great Avenue and planned the two terraces and the Bassin, where the children still sail their toy boats, no vestige whatever is left of that château of the Tuileries which Royalty and the Empire—the Second Empire especially—enlivened with their fêtes and saddened with their vicissitudes.

It was burnt to the ground by the Communists in 1871, and its site is indicated only by the paltry triumphal arch which formed an entrance to the palace;

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ii.

so that the ex-Empress, when she crosses this wilderness of verdure to-day, is forced to close her eyes in order to conjure up a vision of the château where she lived so long, and which seems to have vanished at the stroke of an enchanter's wand. The gardens indeed remain, but changed almost beyond recognition. It is true that the Third Republic has not carried out the scheme formed by the Convention when installed at the Tuileries in 1793. This body then demanded, through the mouth of Chaumette and Dussaulx, that the Champs Elysées and the Tuileries should be converted into useful tilled land.

"The eyes of Republicans," added the former, "will surely rest with more pleasure on this *ci-devant* crown domain when it produces only objects of primal necessity. Would it not be more desirable to cultivate in these gardens such plants as are required for use in hospitals than to preserve here these statues, these fleurs-de-lis cut in box, and other objects that ministered to the luxury and pride of Kings?" The Tuileries have not as yet become a democratic kitchen-garden, but the street which cuts them in halves has certainly been a remarkable concession to public utility in the matter of circulation, if not in the provisioning of hospitals. Unhappily, shade-trees cannot be improvised, and during the burning heats of summer neither lawns nor flowerbeds can replace the century-old yews and horse-chestnuts which once flourished here.

The essential point, after all, is that the disappearance of the Tuileries and the mutilation of its gardens have

not altered the perspective of the Louvre, and that the Seine at this spot has lost none of the charm of its shores. A walk along the quays from the Champs de Mars to the Jardin des Plantes is an unfailing delight; and especially from the Pont des Arts, whose southern end touches the site of the ancient and memorable Tour de Nesle, the scene is an enchantment.

At the hour when the sun is setting in a crimson glow behind Meudon, and its last rays are turning the river to sheets of gold, if we stand with the hills at our back and gaze across at the further shore, we have the Ile de la Cité before us, with the broad Pont Neuf spanning the two arms of the Seine, laden at that hour with pontoons, light pleasure-boats, and heavy barges transporting their cargoes of timber, sand, casks, and stone, and drawn by active little tugs, whose shrill whistle awakes the echoes. Far away, beyond the Pont Neuf, rise the slender spire of the Sainte Chapelle, the twin towers of Notre Dame, and the many domes, towers, and gables of the Cité, delicately outlined against the evening sky.

The Place Dauphine forming a triangle cut off at the summit, we might see, through this opening, the Palais de Justice at its base, if it were not concealed by a group of tall trees on the platform of the Pont Neuf, which also hide in part the two old houses standing sentinel at the entrance to the Place. One of these, at the corner of the Quai de l'Horloge, was the birthplace of Mme. Roland, as the Ile de la Cité was the birthplace of Paris. The delights of a walk along the quays are greatly

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ii.]

enhanced by following the left bank. It is, naturally, a Parisian of the left bank who gives this advice—one, moreover, who adds example to precept and practises diligently what he preaches; whereas a dweller on the right bank is rarely led by his predilections to saunter along the quays of the Louvre, of the Mégisserie, of Gesvres, the Hotel de Ville, and the Célestins.

However, let that pass, and let us cross to the other shore and walk up the Seine, starting from the Pont de la Concorde. The quays Voltaire, Malaquais, de Conti, des Grands Augustins and St Michel are lined at this point by the second-hand book and print-shops and stalls, without which the landscape would lose half its charm, and turn sere and leafless to the Parisian eye. Far from blotting out the scenery by the distractions they offer, these stalls endear it in the sight of the faithful, who despise nothing which adorns the object of their worship. Crowded together, like wine-shops in the faubourg, these bookstalls overflow with volumes piled on shelves one above the other to the ceiling, and as space is still lacking, they cross the road and overflow along the parapets in wooden boxes. Here swarm the literary small-fry, and on this upper shore the loungee fishes with eye and finger as his brother on the river's brink fishes with hook and line. This is one of those spots for which we pine, when away from it, with a peculiarly home-sick pang.

The great Catholic writer, J. K. Huysmans, after he had retired to Ligugé, in Poitou, on the smiling shores of the Clain, once said to us: "Ah, if one could only set



BOOKSTALLS ON THE SEINE EMBANKMENT





up the bookstalls of the Quai Voltaire along these banks, one need no longer sigh for Paris."

When we have passed the bridge and quay of St Michel and reached the Quai Montebello, facing Notre Dame, the dusty books in the boxes alternate with collections of medals under glass, pottery, wrought-iron, and all the refuse, real or false, of an antiquity shop. There, and on the Quai de la Tournelle beyond, one finds no more of those studious retreats propitious for dipping into a book as one lounges on the parapets. The narrowing arm of the Seine here separates, as it were, two distinct provinces, one dead—or, at least, sunk in lethargy—on the Ile St Louis, while the other, wide-awake and populous, crowds the network of streets which climb the mountain of St Geneviève toward the Pantheon. Further still, on the Quai St Bernard, stretch the solitudes, devoid of interest, of the Halle aux Vins and the Jardin des Plantes, which might be called the garden of La Fontaine, exclusively devoted, as it is, to children and animals.

The right bank has the Jardin d'Acclimatation, which harmonizes better with its elegance, but the Jardin des Plantes, more intimate and cosy, as it were, has the good-natured air of an indulgent grandfather smiling upon the sports of the young, and drawing them together to pet and amuse them.

There are undoubtedly foreign menageries far surpassing ours, which offers amusement rather than instruction. The very animals, even the wildest of them, seem to have an instinctive sense of their mission, which is to arouse, at small cost and smaller peril, the imagina-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ii.

tion of the children of the people. The great parterre, however, the conservatories and the museum, speak, for those who wish to instruct themselves, a profitable scientific language. While the citizens of the right bank take their children to the Champs Elysées, the Bois, the Tuileries, and the Parc Monceau, those of the left bank patronize the Luxembourg.

It is an enchanting spot, with its great avenues of horse-chestnuts extending into the Avenue of the Observatory, and forming in spring the most delicious roof of foliage beneath which to stroll, and where the stroller is compensated for some mediocre sculpture in the gardens by Carpeaux's group of "The Four Quarters of the Globe supporting the Sphere," which rises at the end of the avenue. Children and young people flock to the Luxembourg, the former haunting the great fountain, the Punch-and-Judy show, and the wider alleys, where "diavolo" runs least risk of being lost in the trees. The youths and maidens prefer to gather around the bandstand or in the more sequestered paths which give opportunities for love-making, and surely we may look with indulgence upon the romance of the student of twenty, even if he is not a hero of the stamp of Victor Hugo's Marius, and if the girl to whom he loses his heart is equally far from resembling the artless Cosette. Has not the garden itself changed its aspect since Hugo placed his idyl there?

Let us now turn to the enclosed squares, set like pale emeralds in the beaten silver of the old walls. Here is the Place des Vosges, and here the garden of the Palais

Royal. The former, known also as Place Royale, was one of the marvels of old-time Paris, the rendezvous of perfumed elegance, of ruffs, powder, and farthingales, as well as the meeting-place where bravos came to draw their rapiers and thrust each other through the heart, in spite of Richelieu and his edicts. The Marais was the centre of fashion in Paris before the days when the Faubourg St Germain and the Faubourg St Honoré gathered together the aristocratic relics of the Fronde. The magistracy and the bourgeoisie then settled in the deserted nests of the nobility until trade, in its turn, invaded the Marais.

But even then the ancient Square had not quite lost its prestige. It received in 1832 an illustrious tenant, when Victor Hugo became the successor, in their own hotel, of the Rohan Guéménées and of Marion de Lorme.

This hotel now survives alone, rescued from oblivion by this great shade. Around it are only poverty and neglect. The adjoining arcades, when they are not entirely deserted, shelter a sordid trade, the dwellings of the Richelieus, Villedeuils, and Rohans not having had the good luck to become the dwelling of an immortal poet.

The Palais Royal is no less degenerate. It, too, has become, like the Place des Vosges, a burial-place of memories.

Nevertheless, a century ago it was the centre of attraction for all Paris. The call to arms of Camille Desmoulins had been turned into a call to pleasure. Even during the Terror people began to gather here to try and forget

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. II.

the Revolution, and gradually the Forum became a Fair. Twenty cafés, fifteen restaurants, and eighteen gambling-houses were to be found here, and, as a necessary consequence, eleven pawnbrokers' shops. Under these wooden galleries foreigners, soldiers, merchants, pedlars, usurers, flower-girls and courtesans incessantly elbowed each other. It was a "Tartars' Camp." The officers of the Empire hastened here to squander their savings, and the officers of the Allied Armies on their arrival in Paris made haste to emulate them. During the occupation, conquerors and conquered ended the campaign by single combats, fought out under the light of its street-lamps. Here challenges were interchanged between Bonapartists on half-pay and Royalists throughout the Restoration, and this period was the twilight of the Palais Royal.

Under Napoleon III the old garden still flourished, or rather, vegetated, on its past reputation. Jewellers and restaurant-keepers of famous names lingered on, but they have at last put up their shutters, and the galleries are given over to silence and obscurity. The glittering shops are now transferred to the Rue de la Paix, and the famous restaurants to the Madeleine quarter. The vast quadrangle is only enlivened when military bands come there to play airs from *The Black Domino*, *Crown Diamonds*, and other melodies suggestive of happier days.

Another old garden, hanging like a withered leaf upon the bough, odourless but charming, is the little plot one sees from the Boulevard St Michel through the railings of the Cluny Museum.

## CH. ii.] OF OPEN SPACES

Here are the vestiges of the Baths of Julian; more than fifteen centuries have passed over its ruined walls, its fragments of statues and bas-reliefs, columns and capitals, set in a casket of moss, turf, and ivy. Close beside these relics of lost Lutetia the youthful life of the Latin Quarter surges by, like waves beating at the foot of a moss-grown cliff.

The faubourgs of Paris on the east and south also have their parks; these are the Buttes Chaumont and the Parc de Montsouris.

On that part of the heights of Belleville which was transformed into an English park about forty years ago by Alphand stood, all through the Middle Ages, the gallows of Montfaucon, on which the bodies of executed criminals were exposed to view, and where the headless corpse of Gaspard de Coligny hung by the feet for the space of three days. Sometimes not less than sixty bodies were to be seen swinging on these gallows. They were torn down during the Revolution, but the place remained a rubbish-heap until the improvements undertaken during the Second Empire induced Alphand to bestow a public promenade upon the working-men of Belleville and La Vilette.

He showed much skill in utilizing not only the lime-kilns of the old stone-quarries, which had been a refuge for vagabonds, but the "buttes" themselves and all the inequalities of the ground; and to people longing for the country and rural sights, or for journeys in Savoy and Switzerland, he gave the illusion of such scenery by means of grottoes, cascades, torrents and perpendicular

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. II.]

cliffs, surmounted by Greek temples, with here and there a precipitous island rising out of an artificial lake, or a suspension-bridge thrown across a railroad-cutting. These pleasure-grounds are quite unknown to many Parisians, who have also probably never heard of the park of Montsouris, designed in imitation of the Buttes Chaumont, but less picturesque; here the Bardo of the Bey of Tunis was transported after the Exposition of 1867, and turned into a meteorological observatory.

The heights of Paris to the west and north offer other promenades, commanding magnificent panoramas. To the west, on what was formerly the hill of Chaillot, stands the Trocadéro, its grassy terraces descending to the bridge of Jena, with an extensive view over the Gros Caillou, and Vaugirard, Clamart and Meudon in the distance.

To the north rise the Buttes Montmartre, crowned by the church of the Sacré Cœur, the site of which was decreed by the National Assembly in an edict issued July 23, 1873.

It is well known that the new basilica received, as a votive offering from Savoy, the largest bell in France, the Savoyarde. Of the windmills with which the hill was covered in the seventeenth century, and of which a dozen still existed at the time of the Revolution, only two remain, and these are devoted to forms of recreation which possess nothing of a rural character. At various periods there have been projects started for building a great monument on the heights of Montmartre, like a star on the forehead of Paris. Napoleon I planned the erection there



SACRÉ CŒUR, SEEN FROM RUE DE L'ABREUVOIR





of a temple—to Peace! The invasion of 1815 despoiled the spot of verdure and turned it into a desert. Then Paris began climbing these knolls in pursuit of diversion, and the Rothschilds are said to have proposed levelling the mounds, on condition that the land thus selected should become their property. Finally, religious enterprise carried the day, and the land was assigned to the Sacré Cœur, much to the joy of the faithful, who regarded it already as sacred soil, consecrated by the vows of St Francis Xavier and the numerous congregations which had formerly taken up their abode there. But the basilica has not performed the miracle of restoring to Montmartre its pristine odour of sanctity. In fact, the reverse has taken place, and pilgrims ascending the stairways from the streets below are obliged to pass an array of taverns and travelling theatres which perpetuate far other traditions.

We must repeat that the inhabitants of Paris, not having sufficient free space within their boundaries to afford them fresh air and holiday excursions, are obliged to betake themselves to the parks and gardens we have described above. Happily their escape from town is favoured by the proximity of two suburban woods of about equal area, the Bois de Boulogne and the Bois de Vincennes, the latter for the faubourgs, the former for *the* Faubourg.

The Bois de Boulogne enjoys universal fame; it forms a sparkling clasp on the girdle of Paris. It has been said that the idea of embellishing the Bois, and turning it into an English park by prolonging the Champs Elysées, was

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. II.]

suggested to Napoleon III by the memory of his horse-back rides in Hyde Park while he was still Prince Louis Napoleon.

Haussmann, in his *Memoirs*, states, however, that Ernest Picard, one of the five members of the democratic opposition, excited the mirth of his colleagues in the legislative body by accusing the Prefect of the Seine of wishing to *air* the Bois de Boulogne.

“He did not realize how truly he was speaking,” adds Haussmann, “for the Bois undoubtedly lacked both air and view; it was clear that the only thing to do was to pull down the wall and extend the park to the Seine.”

This was done, the area of the Bois being thus enlarged by about a third; but its popularity results chiefly from the permission accorded to the Ediles of Paris to establish a racecourse on the site of the former Abbey of Longchamp. The Republic, not to be behindhand, proceeded at once to inaugurate races at Auteuil, so that the population of Paris, both rich and poor, habitués of the ring and frequenters of the turf, are offered two opportunities, instead of one, for resorting to the Bois in search of something besides fresh air.

One need not wait for the *Grand Prix* to be convinced of the eagerness of the crowd for their favourite sport, for whenever a race takes place at the Bois, which is, on an average, seventy times a year, the railroad, the Métro, cabs, trams, brakes, vans, landaus, *coupés*, and autos disgorge throngs of passengers at every gate. How many, seeing the horse on which they had placed their hopes

## CH. ii.] OF OPEN SPACES

and their bets failing to respond to the more or less genuine efforts of the jockey on his back, have applied to the latter Boileau's line :

“ Le chagrin monte en croupe et galope avec lui ” !\*

Sometimes losers, seeing or believing that they are being cheated, make a furious onslaught on the barriers, threatening to break them down, to attack the attendants and burn the grand-stand, but their wrath is soon spent; and when at the end of the day the motley crowd streams back into Paris, one might seek in vain to distinguish between the winners and those to whom fortune had been unkind.

Apart from these days of excitement, the Bois is frequented in the morning by riders, including jockeys, officers, and sportsmen ; in the afternoon by the monde and the demi-monde; and as soon as night falls the place is haunted by vagrants of every sort.

The Bois now wears as mere titles those great names: Madrid, La Muette, Ranelagh, Bagatelle, Longchamp, the Pré Catelan, which once belonged respectively to a royal château, a hunting-box, a folly erected by the Comte d'Artois, brother of Louis XVI, a scandalous Abbey, and, finally, to a sort of Trianon and permanent *fête foraine*.

Let us not overlook another folly, that known as the Folie St James, which belonged to the Princess Borghese, and was the head-quarters of Wellington in 1815. He was succeeded by the Prussians under Blücher, who, less

\* “ Black care doth mount behind and gallop with him.”

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. II.]

respectful of this estate than he had been, sacked and plundered it.

As to the traditional drive round the lake, which was formerly a daily habit of elegant Paris, the day is fast approaching when it will have lost its attractions for all except wedding-parties in landaus and stray pairs of lovers.

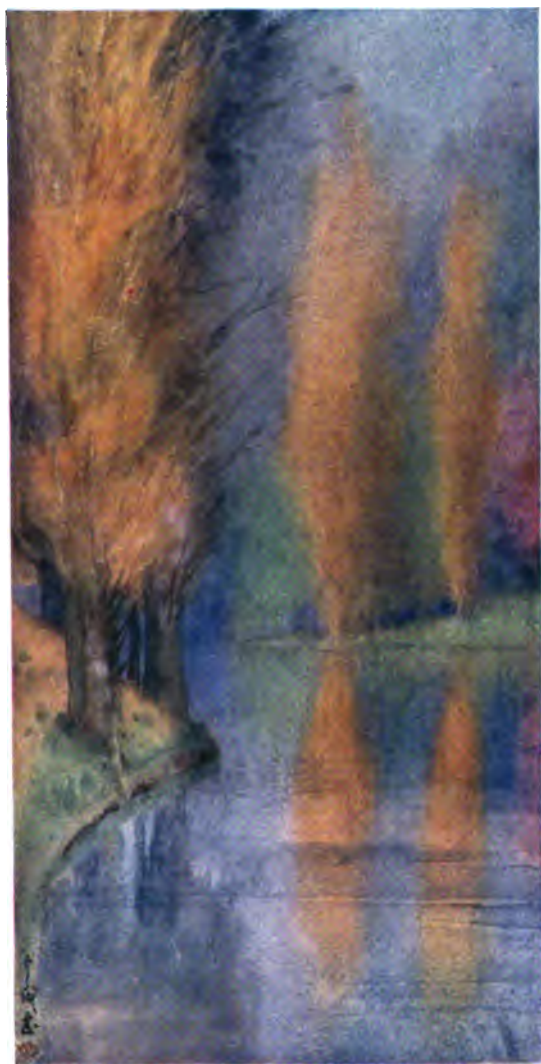
The automobile does not lend itself to gentle revelry, so we do not behold fifty or so of these vehicles in a procession making a sleepy tour of the lake at the rate of three leagues an hour. The tour of the Lake of Geneva still survives, but the *tour du lac* in the Bois calls up only a dim vision of the heyday of the Second Empire, with its *barouches à la Daumont*, its *cocottes* and dandies.

*Sic transit gloria mundi!*

Just as the Bois de Boulogne has its Porte Maillot, its lake, and deer-pond, so the Bois de Vincennes has its Porte Jaune, its lake of the Minimes, and its three islands; it is also provided with cascades, prattling streams, and a hippodrome.

Moreover, far from begrudging to its aristocratic rival its processions of carriages packed with wedding guests, the Bois de Vincennes offers them the pleasures of the table to succeed those of the promenade. *Salons des familles!* This suggestive sign might be extended to everything in the park; its lawns, lakes, and shrubberies might be appropriately called family lawns, family groves, and family lakes. The family is indeed at home here, and on Sundays makes itself very conspicuously so.

The Faubourg St Antoine, if it now goes further



LAKE IN THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE



CH. II.]            OF OPEN SPACES

afield, has not, for all that, given up Vincennes. It comes here less frequently, perhaps, during the long summer days to picnic on the grass, but on Sundays families are still to be seen camping on the lawns, stretched at full length in the shade, and, unfortunately also, strewing the landscape with greasy papers and empty bottles.

Evidently this park is not remarkable for the distinction of its frequenters. Nevertheless, in the morning hours it rivals the Bois de Boulogne in beauty, and, indeed, surpasses it in the solitude and mystery of its woodland coverts. Even in the afternoon it preserves an *intime* character which the other park lacks, and which it owes to the schools which take their walks there, to the numerous bowling parties, and the groups of peaceful citizens playing picquet under the trees. As for the secular oak, beneath whose shade legend affirms that St Louis administered justice, it is useless to look for it. That St Louis may have walked here, and that he was disposed to deal justly, must suffice to reconcile us to the disappearance of the oak—if so be that it ever existed !

Vincennes possesses, on the other hand, a hippodrome for steeplechases and trotting-matches, which take place a score of times during the year, but even here it cannot be claimed that justice is always administered.

Finally, those parents prone to instructive walks and inclined to mingle *utile dulci* will not pass the dungeon of Vincennes without reminding their offspring that this fortress, long a royal residence, was later turned



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ii.

into a prison of state, in which many noted people were confined. Here was Latude's cell, and in the moat of the castle the Duc d'Enghien was shot by order of the Emperor.

But as anecdote is apt to take precedence of history in the youthful mind, the child will be more likely to remember the reply of General Daumesnil, surnamed Wooden-Leg, Governor of the Castle in 1814, to the allied generals who summoned him to capitulate. "I will give up the place," said he, "when you give me back my leg."

Such warlike memories are recalled to-day only by the reports from the adjacent artillery-ground.

We will now make our way back to Paris for a final word as to its forty or more squares, of which we have small reason to be proud, when we compare them with the squares of London.

Those of Paris, narrow and confined, with their lawns enclosed by wire railings, recall the plots of ground in which animals are penned at the Zoo. Moreover, these squares are invariably crowded with statues and busts, which appear to be set up by way of apology for opening them to the public.

They are not gay, these Paris squares! The very children, shut up and tormented inside them, would greatly prefer to play in the open street; and, indeed, certain squares, near the centre of Paris, have such a bad reputation that mothers no longer dare to trust their children in them, in view of the powerlessness of the police to control the rabble which resorts there. Yet

## CH. ii.] OF OPEN SPACES

such oases of verdure, larger, better kept-up, and protected, would afford, not only attractive adjuncts, but breathing-spaces essential to the health of the quarter.

Automobilism now enables the prosperous classes to absent themselves from town between Saturday and Monday, as well as for prolonged holidays; but this resource is not open to the working-classes of the faubourgs, where the congestion is constantly increasing. The superb gardens of the Convent of St Michel, in the Rue St Jacques, have recently disappeared to make way for huge commercial buildings, which increase the density of the population to the detriment of hygienic conditions. The Champs de Mars and La Muette have also been encroached upon—a necessity of progress, we are told.

Our misfortune is that we are without societies and clubs like those of London, which reconcile this necessity with the growing taste for outdoor life among all classes, and which prevent private property from encroaching on the space still reserved for public health and enjoyment.

It would be unjust not to mention the great cemeteries among the out-of-door resorts of the city.

Although Haussmann claimed, not without reason, that the majority of burial-places are abandoned at the end of forty years, it is none the less true that the French people have a reverence for their dead. Even the frivolous Parisians form no exception to the rule, and on All Saints' Day they flock to their three necropolises

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ii.

of the east, north, and south—Père Lachaise, Montmartre, and Montparnasse.

The first of these is the more spacious, and its plane-trees, sycamores, and cypresses shade many illustrious tombs. None of these is more eagerly sought for than that of Alfred de Musset, with its weeping-willow and the familiar lines :

“ Mes chers amis, quand je mourrai  
Plantez un saule au cimetière.”

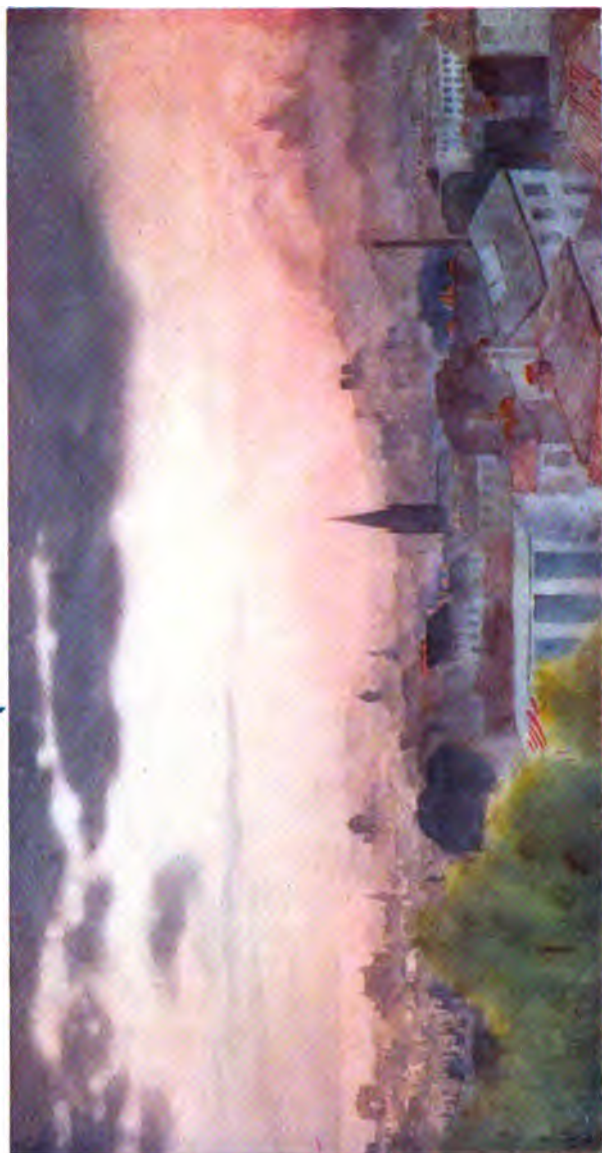
Here, also, is the bust of Balzac by David; and thus the human comedy ends where it began, for Balzac loved to walk on this hill of graves, from whose height he too, perhaps, like his own Rastignac at the funeral of Père Goriot, hurled his proud defiance at Paris as it lay beneath him : “ It is between us two now ! ”

And here Death, which makes no final distinction between the bitterest foes, gives equal shelter to the men who made the Commune and died by it, and to the man—Thiers—who unmade it and lived thereby.

At the cemetery of Montmartre, which also dominates Paris, one may visit the graves of Murger and Stendhal, and that of Cavaignac, the latter on account of his monument, which is a *chef-d'œuvre* by Rude.

At Montparnasse sleep Sainte Beuve, Baudelaire, and Huysmans, the two former persecuted in death by their theatrical monuments from the hand of the same sculptor.

It is quite superfluous to say that the colour of Paris is not—cannot be—the same to the eyes of a foreigner, or a provincial, as to Parisian eyes. This colour is de-



VIEW FROM PÈRE LACHAISE



## CH. II.] OF OPEN SPACES

pendent on the weather, the hour, the frame of mind of the beholder ; it also depends greatly on the language which our memories, our studies, our emotions lend to these time-worn stones, which are so rapidly disappearing before the march of progress, but of which enough remains to recall a past buried beneath dust-heaps and restorations. There is even too wide a field of choice. One lover of old Paris wishes to revive the Middle Ages, another the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries ; a third cares only for Paris of the Revolution. He searches for the site of the club of the Cordeliers, or the house of Robespierre, and if he enters the conciergerie, it is to visit the cell of Marie Antoinette.

But even if the old stage-setting remains, does it not require an effort of the imagination and a certain power of enthusiasm to sweep it clear and purify it from all degrading associations ? Look, for instance, at the Place des Victoires and the Place Vendôme.

Until 1830 the hotels, erected in the seventeenth century on a uniform plan by Mansart, preserved the physiognomy of the Place dedicated to Louis XIV by the Maréchal de la Feuillade. Here dwelt, in the following century, the *fermiers généraux* and financiers, among whom was the famous Law. As for the statue of Louis XIV which adorns the centre of the Place des Victoires, though Fate may have dealt capriciously with it, this caprice is less deplorable than the vandalism which has covered the surrounding houses with signs and advertisements.

This same vandalism, which for a long time spared

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. II.

the Place Vendôme, has dealt with it in our day as with the Place des Victoires. The Place Vendôme was also designed by Mansart, who built his own hotel there. The Ministry of Justice, the seat of the military Government of Paris, and the Chancellerie, all situated on this magnificent Place, long preserved it from profanation. This is no longer the case, however. Trade now writes on its façades as freely as in the public prints, and who knows how long it will be before advertisements encircle the column of the Place des Conquêtes?

Another commemorative column, bearing a statue of the Genius of Liberty in place of Napoleon as Cæsar, still decorates the Place de la Bastille. This is the Column of July—not named, as one would naturally suppose, in memory of the capture of the Bastille, but in honour of the “three glorious days” of July, 1830. The names of the 504 combatants who died for liberty during those three days are engraved on the shaft of the column, which thus opposes the example of a popular victory to the panegyric in bronze of the triumphs of the Grand Army.

And the two quarters where these monuments stand accentuate the contrast. The Place Vendôme represents stately, rich, official Paris; the Place de la Bastille is the entrance to the faubourg which formerly descended into the city to fight, and which now descends only to labour.

One would fain inquire whether strangers visiting Paris bring to it the same intelligent curiosity which

## CH. II.] OF OPEN SPACES

usually animates the French traveller, and leads him to seek out, on arriving in a hitherto unknown city, its historic quarters, its ancient churches and dwellings—the earliest specimens, in short, of its architecture and decorative art. The French traveller has a taste for antiquity, even if it be sometimes a pseudo-antiquity or more or less skilful restoration. He pauses in rapture before the relics of a former age, even when they recall an era with which he is imperfectly acquainted. He also delights in tortuous streets, in blind alleys, and picturesque old quarters, devoid of air and light, without thought of the human beings huddled together in such spots. He passes on, a delighted spectator, while these unfortunates remain behind.

This amateur of antiquity has another failing. He seeks at a distance, either in the provinces or abroad, for what exists in Paris, quite unnoticed by him, and not pointed out by any guide-book.

And yet what a happy hunting-ground old Paris may still be for the antiquary ! The left bank, explored by Huysmans, reveals many quaint nooks, of which it would be rash to undertake a description after his. The visitor should wander with Huysmans' monograph on the Bièvre in his hand through the street and alley of the Gobelins and that extraordinary alley of the Récollets, at the end of which he comes upon a surprising stretch of gardens and orchards belonging to the Gobelins factory. Over these gardens there blows from morning till night a breeze poisoned by the odour of tanneries and factory smoke. Yet they are like an oasis in this



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ii.]

desert of indigence, whose hovels elbow each other along the bank of a muddy, rust-stained stream.

It is not the cracked and tottering houses alone which are powdered as with hoar-frost by the scrapings of the hides. The workwomen emerge from the factories with their hair as white as if sprinkled with snowflakes ; and the name of the " Reine Blanche " scarcely excites astonishment as applied to an old castle now utilized for leather-dressing, which stands in a dingy courtyard, and whose ancient clock no longer deigns to mark the time for the adjoining wash-house. They are, indeed, only wash-house queens and snow-queens who dwell in this unique corner of Paris, where the passages are still lighted by oil-lamps.

Huysmans, who was often reproached for his realism, escapes from it whenever he can by the aid of symbols. The Bièvre appeared to him as a poor country lass who has been captured and led astray on her arrival in Paris by sordid tradesmen, who force her to wash hides for them and stain herself with the mire of the town. He magnifies the sadness of the spot, and invokes Rembrandt to paint it, thus revealing his Dutch origin ; but the naturalized Parisian reasserts himself in his indifference to the possible alleviation which this ill-smelling quarter would derive from covering up the Bièvre and clearing out these foul alleys. A fugitive artistic impression causes him to disregard the advantages of hygiene and salubrity for the unfortunates who dwell here, whose rags, meanwhile, he embroiders with his pen of gold, and whose crumbling walls he retouches with the magic of his style.

CH. II.]                    OF OPEN SPACES

But the inkpot of the writer is free from stench, and the Bièvre, alas! is not.

If he were still living, Huysmans would doubtless deplore the clearing away of the buildings at the rear of St Séverin. It pleased him to see the old church set in the midst of those dark, narrow streets like a diamond of the Middle Ages in its black vein of rock.

He had already seen with regret the disappearance of the Place Maubert, and that part of the Rue Galande where stood the Château Rouge, a tavern frequented by house-breakers and assassins, which was shown to distinguished foreigners to afford them an approximate idea of the lowest slums of Paris.

The Abbaye aux Bois, too, was already condemned when this great artist died in 1907. He had planned to fix its image for ever in his pages as he had done so powerfully for Notre Dame, St Merri, St Germain l'Auxerrois, St Séverin, the Gobelins Quarter, and St Sulpice.

However, the mere lack of an abbey need not trouble the lover of old Paris; he has only to betake himself on a Sunday in summer to certain quarters, such as the Marais or the Temple. The ancient hotels, now given over to commerce, like the Hôtel de Sully or St Aignan, appear to be communing with themselves behind their turreted Gothic portals. Within the deserted courtyards rise dark staircases, of which one sees in the obscurity only the lower steps and the wrought-iron balusters. Here and there one catches a glimpse of a bas-relief, a gable, a carved door, a sculptured mask, a balcony, a fountain, or one sees aged figures seated in silence with a dog at

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. II.]

their feet, or a cat on their knees ; and this is enough to brighten the atmosphere of an oppressive afternoon in this crowded quarter, with its entire population rushing to catch trams, 'buses, cabs, or the *Métro*.

It is the same on the left bank, in the Faubourg St Germain, among the sumptuous eighteenth-century dwellings, whose owners have flown to the seashore or the mountains, or are spinning along the dusty highways in their automobiles, while their houses sleep away the summer days under the protection of the great names they bear—Créquy, Montmorency, d'Artois, de Guise, Laubespin. Here we are in the provinces—the aristocratic provinces—where nothing has changed for centuries, except that the stables are converted into garages, to the stupefaction of these spacious and sonorous courtyards, of which the motor-car alone now wakes the echoes.

Why linger, therefore, over the relics of old Paris and its fading past? Is it not better to be distinctly of our own time, like the son of the German Emperor—that Prince Eitel who, having but half a day to devote to Paris, divided it between the tomb of the Emperor, an automobile factory, and a walk on the boulevards? How many others before him have passed through Paris, knowing only the line of the boulevards between the Place de la République and the Place de la Concorde, and from the Théâtre-Français to the Gare St Lazare?

In the eyes of the provincial and the foreigner, all Parisian life seems to centre there—in its shop-windows, the terraces of its cafés, and the doors of its theatres,

## CH. II.] OF OPEN SPACES

amid the rush of vehicles and the glare of those illuminated signs which, in the evening and from a distance, appear like the celestial bill-posting foreseen by Villiers de l'Isle Adam in one of his *Contes Cruels*.

And, after all, are not these crowded, dusty side-walks the spot where spring comes earliest, as if Paris communicated its excitement to the mounting sap and the bursting buds? Do not business activities, great reputations, journalism, gossip, all the sparks and flashes of the life of a great city, radiate from this focus? So be it. That little line of the boulevards, arched in the middle and curving at the corners, forms, if you like, the lips of Paris—those facile, tireless lips, which never weary of too much talking and of laughing at all things. And the universal infatuation for this one feature of an immense, many-sided city can no more be explained than can the kindred phenomenon expressed in Sully Prudhomme's lines :

“Toi qui fait les grandes amours,  
Petite ligne de la bouche !”

## CHAPTER III

# Of the Faubourgs—The Working Class

Morning Influx from Montmartre and Belleville—Street Sweepers and Milkmen—Working Girls—The Midday Lunch—The Unemployed—Philanthropic Works—General Confederation of Labour—Popular Universities and Entertainments—Overcrowded Tenements

**E**MILE ZOLA, in the opening pages of his most famous novel, *L'Assommoir*, shows us the morning tide of humanity pouring down from the heights of Montmartre and La Chapelle, and making its daily irruption into Paris. The picture is sketched in broadly, and is full of motion and life.

First come the workmen—locksmiths in blue smock-frocks, masons in white aprons, house-painters with long blouses showing below their overcoats. Then follow the women—milliners, artificial flower-makers, metal-burnishers, and seamstresses—some singly, walking with a sober air and rapid step, others in gay groups of threes or fours. Finally come the employees, young and old, the youths gaunt and lean, munching a penny-roll as they walk along, the older men stopping under a *porte-cochère* to drink (standing) the bowl of milk which constitutes their early breakfast; and behind them the old men totter along, with worn, haggard faces, faithfully treading their daily round, unbroken by change or recreation.

Zola painted the workaday Paris of the Empire; but his description is not out of date, except in minor de-



VIEW FROM MONTMARTRE



### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

tails, and we can verify its accuracy at the present day if we watch the working world on its way down from Montmartre, Belleville, or Plaisance. We may regret, however, that the observer in Zola's pages did not rise earlier, and accordingly did not catch sight of the first scouts of the vanguard of labour, nor even of the vanguard itself. The first-comers one meets at four o'clock in the morning are the milkmen—sturdy young fellows, clad in blouses and wearing tall caps, whose open carts, drawn by vigorous *percheron* horses, are laden with the milk-cans sent in from the country the previous evening, and received at the freight-stations during the night. The noise of these cans as they rattle along in the two-wheeled carts is the alarm-clock which wakens many Parisians every morning. The milkmen are in haste, and it is curious to watch the agility with which they spring from their carts while in motion, deposit the fresh cans at the doors of the creameries and fruit-shops, and pick up the empty cans of the previous day. It is at four o'clock, also, that the street-sweepers, male and female, begin their labours, which often consist chiefly in raising a cloud of dust. They are employed by the city, the women earning three francs or three fifty, and the men five francs a day; so their job is in as great demand as that of the road-menders, and can be obtained only through recommendation or electoral influence.

At about the same hour the market porters, or *forts des halles*, to the number of 600 or so, begin their daily task. These athletes are well named, especially if we consider that they are only admitted to the Corporation after



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.]

a test of strength, consisting in carrying on their backs for a distance of 250 metres a wicker basket laden with 200 kilos of cast-iron.

No one is allowed to unload a market-cart at the *halles* without the assistance of these porters ; but they, on the other hand, have the right to call in the aid of labourers from among the swarm of the destitute and unemployed who throng the markets. These are called *coups de main*, or helping hands, and are paid by the job or the hour.

Five o'clock is the time for the women to begin delivering bread from door to door. This is hard work, carried on usually by small and frail, but plucky women, who, before beginning their rounds, are obliged to brush the loaves and carry them from the oven to the shop ; out of doors they are like busy ants, pushing their little covered carts and delivering their wares on every floor, often climbing over eighty flights of stairs in the course of the morning. At the same hour the newspaper-vendor begins her day's work, which consists of folding deftly sheet after sheet from the great bales of newspapers brought to her in waggons and hand-carts, and preparing them for their delivery by bicyclists to subscribers all over Paris.

The municipal garbage-waggons make their rounds between half-past six and half-past eight in summer, and between seven and nine in winter.

We say nothing of the nocturnal rag-picker, with his hod, hook, and lantern, because this type, so famous in literature, was abolished by the decrees of 1883 and 1884.



BOULEVARD DES BATIGNOLLES



### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

He has been succeeded by the so-called *biffin* of to-day, who, unless he is so fortunate as to possess a horse or a donkey, piles his bags of refuse on a hand-cart, which the elder members of his family aid him to push through the streets, while the younger children finish their morning nap on the top of the bags. Gradually these carts make their way towards their special quarter, which is now confined to the 18th and 19th districts, or to the suburbs of Clichy and St Denis. The number of families that live by the trade of rag-picking is estimated at nearly 50,000.

Meanwhile Paris awakes. A steady stream of labourers pours in from the suburbs by the early trains. It is an army of 250,000 men and women which invades Paris each morning.

Here come the masons on their way to the building-yards ; these labourers are hired in two separate ways, either by the gang at the yard, or *en grève*—that is, from a labour union. The 6,000 navvies employed on the Metropolitan are mostly from the provinces or from abroad, and are hired by the gang. The masons and house-painters, on the other hand, can be hired only at the unions. The Masons' Union is situated behind the Hotel de Ville, opposite the Lobau barracks, while the Painters' Union is at Batignolles. The interviews between employers and applicants for a job take place at these labour markets between six and eight in the morning. By eight o'clock all the ambulant provision-stalls have disappeared, after serving working men with their first breakfast, drawn up under a *porte-cochère* or a hastily

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.

erected tent. Here the sensible working man swallows his bowl of hot milk or soup, coffee, or chocolate, instead of resorting to a bar.

Over 300,000 of such *petits déjeûners* are sold each morning to Parisian employees and workmen.

Seven o'clock : and in the outlying districts, where mills and factories abound, and where the workmen were formerly summoned to their work by the sound of a bell, which could only be heard in the immediate vicinity, they are now called by a shrill siren or steam-whistle, which wakes everybody for miles around from their morning naps, and whose piercing shrieks recur at intervals during the day.

Work has now begun everywhere—in the factories, mills, and workshops, in the subterranean shafts of the *Métro*, and in the building-yards.

We can see the carpenters in their black blouses, red belts, and baggy brown or blue velveteen trousers, hoisting planks and timbers for the framework of the houses which they are beginning to build, the outer walls of which will shortly be raised by the *Limousins* and *Limousinants*, the Paris synonyms for masons and plasterers. Before long a flag flying from the roof will announce that their part of the big job is finished, and will invite the owner to feast the workmen.

Then comes the turn of the joiners, locksmiths, chimney-builders, painters, and decorators, all gaily whistling and singing on their scaffoldings and ladders, like the true Parisians they are, (with the exception of the chimney-sweepers and whitewashers, who are more likely to

### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

be Italians). The masons, on the other hand, come from Limousin, and the day-labourers from Luxembourg or Piedmont.

By eight o'clock all the dressmakers' and milliners' shops are open and soon filled by flocks of gay, chattering girls, most of whom have loitered on their way from the faubourgs to stare at the shop-windows, or to adorn their bodices with bouquets from the fruiterer's stall or the flower-woman's basket. These girls have various little superstitions in regard to their nosegays. The lily-of-the-valley, for instance, is thought to bring luck if worn on May Day; orange-blossoms are worn by unmarried girls of twenty-five on November 25, St Catherine's Day, in honour of their patroness, for whom they are called "Catherinettes"; as for violets, they find equal favour with all. On their way to town, by tram, boat, auto-bus, or *Métro*, these girls all read the love-stories in the fiction supplement of one of the newspapers.

This light infantry of needlework has its grades and its rank-and-file. First come the captain and lieutenant, with the veterans serving under their orders, aided by young recruits, known as *petites-mains*; there are also the little apprentices, or *arpètes*, who deliver the work and run errands for the shop, and are constantly to be met laden with enormous hat-boxes or voluminous dress-cases, known as "cocos" in the slang of the shop. Nor are these all. The staff of a great dressmaking establishment includes also its furnishers, who provide goods and trimmings; its sellers, who show materials and

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.]

patterns to customers; and its tryers-on, whose fine figures show off the garments to advantage.

These dressmakers and milliners have been busily at work for an hour before the female clerks arrive at their offices. Women in these days furnish a numerous contingent to the public offices, railway-companies, and banks, while typewriting affords employment to a still greater number. But the woman-clerk distinguishes herself as much as possible from the workwoman, especially in the street, by her quiet bearing and reserve of manner; she emphasizes the distance between them as carefully as the masculine clerk draws the line between himself and the workman. For no consideration on earth, for instance, would she be seen carrying her breakfast in a basket like a vulgar *arpète*. She conceals hers decorously in a handbag, or does it up in a parcel so skilfully as to deceive the eye. She would blush to reveal the neck of a bottle or the shell of a hard-boiled egg, and she disdains the penny-roll in favour of the more *distingué* crescent. Finally, she peruses on her way to town a volume from the circulating-library, which, by the way, often tells the same story as the working-girl's supplement.

From nine o'clock onwards, trade, whether itinerant or stationary, becomes general.

While the hive of the workshops is in full hum, the *placiers* and *placières* (commercial-travellers, male and female) go their rounds, exhibiting among their customers the latest novelty in flowers, feathers, and hat-frames. It is especially in the district of the Bourse and

### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

the Rue Vivienne that one is apt to meet them, followed by porters carrying a string of boxes strapped upon long poles.

The postmen have by this time accomplished their first distribution of mail ; the cabmen are all upon their stands ; patients of the poorer class are to be seen returning from the hospitals and from the dispensary of the "Federation," which provides gratuitous advice for the victims of accidents from labour. In the populous quarters the vegetable vendors are abroad, and the money and rent collectors have begun their rounds ; even the big shops have waked at last and lifted their heavy metallic eyelids, and the clerks are busily engaged in decorating the show-windows. At the crossings where the traffic is most congested the policemen have begun raising their white batons. This morning block, far from heightening the animation of our thoroughfares, has rather diminished their gaiety of aspect. The police now deal harshly with itinerant vendors of all sorts, and the small trades of other days, whose picturesque cries dominated the roar of daily traffic, are being gradually suppressed by police regulations, by the great bazaars—by progress, in short.

The water-carrier, the knife-grinder, the glazier, the pedlar of second-hand clothing and rabbit-skins, the fish-woman with her refreshing cry, "À la barque ! à la barque !" the vendor of chickweed for caged birds, the mender of crockery and porcelain, and how many more petty trades have vanished from the street-scene which they enlivened ! There were also the wafer-



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.

woman with her whirligig, the *coco*-seller with his fountain, hand-organs, itinerant musicians and singers, charlatans and mountebanks.

The street-cries, moreover, had not only their special use at a time when no one could read ; they also announced the time of day to housewives busy with their marketing, and enlivened the toils of seamstresses and working-girls with other strains than those of the auto-horn, the tramway, and the shriek of the siren. When the shops closed at nightfall there stood the ballad-singer, not driven from pillar to post as he is to-day, but allowed to linger in the courtyards and alleys and at the cross-roads, where he made one think of the man who scatters crumbs to the birds in the public gardens. Even so he scattered his songs amidst a circle of apprentices and working-girls, who carried away, as the birds in their beaks, a crumb of diversion to lighten their toils. Now he is hardly tolerated anywhere, except in the creameries, and even there he must not interfere with the service of the most crowded hour—the hour of the *coup-de-feu*.

It is noon, and the workwomen and petty employees are thronging the cook-shops and creameries, the cheap co-operative restaurants and the canteens of the large companies, where the food provided is cheap and sufficiently substantial. But moderate as the price may be (from sixty to ninety centimes a meal being the minimum), this fare is not within the means of all. Many breakfast out of doors through the summer, seated on benches in the squares and boulevards, their fare consist-



THE MAN WHO FEEDS THE BIRDS IN THE TUILERIES GARDENS



### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

ing of *charcuterie*, giblets, fried potatoes, cheese, and fruit, or else of "portions" prepared at the cook-stalls and booths, which contend for custom with the wine-shops. The clerks from the Rue de la Paix betake themselves to the Tuileries gardens; those from the Chaussée d'Antin frequent the Square de la Trinité; while those from the Rue Richelieu install themselves in the Square Louvois, the squares offering the advantage of fountains, where the *midinettes* can quench their thirst.

Certain philanthropic societies have conceived the generous idea of supplying working-girls with wholesome food and shelter by establishing restaurants for women only, feminine clubs and shelters like the Réchaud (or Chafing-Dish) in the Rue St Honoré, where over a hundred young girls breakfast daily for fifty centimes per head. These restaurants, which are not numerous as yet, have a small and faithful set of customers, but whether their custom is likely to increase is another question. It is with the restaurant as with the railway-carriage "For Ladies Only," which has charms for persons only of a certain age, and hardly for those.

To these philanthropic establishments the young working-girl will always prefer the creamery, where she breakfasts side by side with the clerk or employee, who notices her, admires her, amuses her, and gives rise in her mind and heart to dreams and sentiments which do not always deceive.

Private initiative offers another example which might be followed in other countries besides France: these are the maternity canteens, or free restaurants, open morn-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.

ing and night to mothers nursing their babies and too poor to feed themselves, either in consequence of desertion or of lack of work on the part of their husbands. Unwedded mothers can also participate in this relief.

Finally, within the past few years, special establishments have been opened where, on the payment of two sous, the customer, standing at a counter, may drink a cup of excellent coffee, very different from the beverage compounded of chicory which is served elsewhere.

Now that noon has struck, the *midinette* may saunter for a moment to gaze into the shop-windows at the illustrated magazines, photographs, and post-cards, or at the more luxurious display in the jewellers' and goldsmiths' windows, or in the confectioners' and florists', the leather shops, the perfumers', shoemakers', and fine *lingerie* stores; then for a glance at the pillars on which the theatres announce their performances, at the café terraces where a few loungers are seated, at passing carriages, at the sun, at the fine weather; a final puff at the cigarette, a last free peal of laughter, and toil is resumed in all the cells and dens of the working world.

One branch of commerce has modified its conditions of late at the expense of picturesqueness in our streets; that is the hawking of furniture, which used to be carried on in the Avenue Ledru Rollin, and which enabled the cabinet-maker of the Faubourg St Antoine to exhibit his hand-made furniture and dispose of it himself, and also afforded the purchaser an opportunity for securing artistic pieces at a bargain; but this traffic



KIOSKS IN THE GRAND BOULEVARD



### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

has now passed into the hands of the speculator and middleman. It is the same with the little booths set up along the boulevards as New Year's Day approaches, which are authorized for the benefit of the handicraftsmen, but are too often hired by speculators.

As the season for New Year's gifts and the Carnival draws near, many poor workmen in the Marais and the Faubourg du Temple begin taxing their ingenuity to the utmost in the invention of some new *article de Paris*, some toy or mask, or in modelling, painting, and dressing the dolls and wooden soldiers which are still the children's favourite playthings. It is in their close lodgings, furnished only with a work-bench, stove, table, and bed, that these poor men attempt to carry out their ideas, often in the midst of their families, and with their models standing about on the bed or the floor—those models which the inventor in desperation usually hands over in the end to the dealer, who is better able than he to find a market for them. So that the unfortunate craftsman often exerts his imagination and expends his pains and skill for next to nothing, and is left without work for six months out of the twelve.

Many other branches of industry are as cruelly tried, and often, in times of crisis or pecuniary stress, there are not less than 100,000 men out of work and literally on the streets.

What can they do there to earn a living—that is, literally to escape dying of want? They are thankful to accept any kind of work. Some of them turn *bagottiers*, the name given to the poor wretches who run



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.

after cabs at the railway-stations in the hope of being allowed to lend a hand in unloading the luggage, and who usually spend their breath for nothing; others cry the morning papers, which are distributed among them at the *Croissant*, at the rate of two francs fifty the hundred. Advertising agents hire some of them as sandwich-men, or in some other strange accoutrement, to announce new wares, and at such jobs they average thirty sous a day, sometimes less.

Others, again, distribute prospectuses, or apply to some philanthropic society which provides them with wood to chop, or bags and coarse garments to make.

The destitute patients discharged from the hospitals, who dare not venture to solicit work in their fumigated and disinfected clothing, can obtain from a charitable organization a decent suit of clothes in which they may seek employment without running the risk of being turned from the doors. Working-men who are temporarily reduced to want in consequence of illness or lack of employment can place their children under the care of maternity-houses (unfortunately very limited in number), where they will be fed and sheltered for a certain length of time. There are municipal or private shelters which receive, during the last months before her confinement, the woman, married or not, who has been dismissed and turned into the street by a pitiless master. What would become of these unfortunates, without a position and utterly destitute, if such a refuge were not open to them?

Women who are at work from morning to night

### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

away from home, can leave their children under three years of age at a day-nursery, where they are cared for gratuitously, or at a rate of compensation varying from fifteen to thirty centimes a day. From the ages of two to six, children are admitted to the maternal-school, where they can breakfast for ten or fifteen centimes, thanks to the school fund, which also provides, as far as possible, for their wardrobe, and organizes very successful vacation-schools. From the maternal-school the child passes on to the primary, which he leaves at the age of thirteen to begin his apprenticeship under an employer, or to enter a technical school. But the fact of having passed through the latter institution does not profit him greatly from an economic point of view. When trade languishes in consequence of over-production, there is no escaping the fate of the unemployed, and it is in vain that working-men's syndicates, or the *Mairie*, lend their aid and their advertising agencies. Seamstresses, on the other hand, have registry offices of their own, consisting of written notices pasted up on blank walls or in vacant shop-windows.

It would be the merest irony to question the makers of underclothing and ready-made garments, who have the luck—if luck it may be called—to find work, as to whether a woman can live in Paris on 100 francs a month. This question, which has been asked by certain investigators, has already been answered by the labour-bureau, in behalf of these pariahs of the needle.

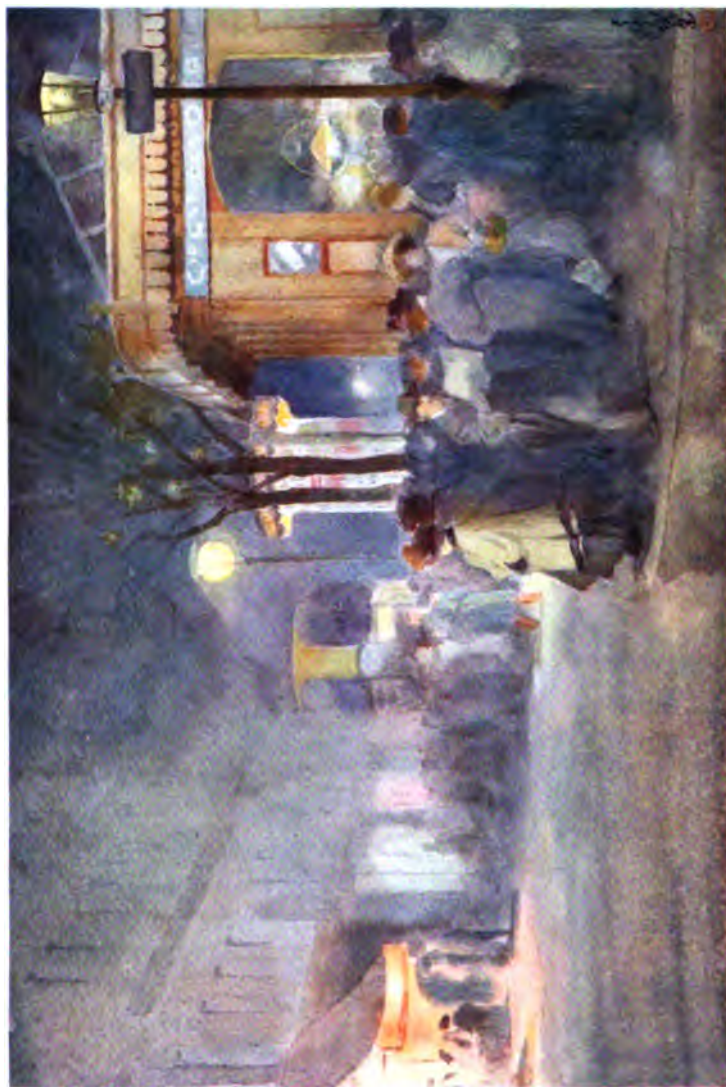
They live upon far less than 100 francs a month. Many wear themselves out in the attempt to earn a

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.

franc or a franc and twenty-five centimes per day—that is, ten or twelve centimes an hour. Moreover, they must deduct from this sum the price of sewing-materials, which they have to supply. When their rent is paid, there remains to them for food and clothing, heating, lights, and washing, the sum of sixty centimes per day; and such penury is far from being the exception. More than half of the aged workwomen whose eyes are worn out, and whose fingers have grown stiff over their toil, earn less than 400 francs a year, upon which they contrive to exist—but how? It is true that they are not called upon to “dress up a bit,” a necessity which reduces the budget of the shop-girl and clerk, and even of the young working-girl. All things considered, therefore, the woman who works outside her home, and is consequently obliged to spend more on her dress, to ride in omnibuses, and to wear out her shoes, is hardly better off at 100 francs a month than the home-worker on a much smaller salary.

They are sisters in poverty and privation, and have nothing to envy each other when they meet in the evening on the faubourg, at the hour when the turn of the tide has brought back the outflowing stream of the morning.

Take up your stand at six in the evening amidst the throng on the boulevards; watch the hundreds of girls pouring out from a great counting-house where they are employed, and you will then form an idea of the Parisienne, which neither novels, plays, nor the descriptions of travellers will have given you.



OMNIBUS STATION: PLACE ST. GERMAIN DES PRÈS



### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

For she is a Parisienne, too, in the best acceptation of the word, this little *souris* of the railroad-company, the bank, or the great store, who earns her living courageously and carries home regularly her meagre wages. In fact, her leading characteristics are courage and high spirits. In Paris you never see the young working-girl going about with the air of a prisoner condemned to hard-labour, for though she is serious and practical at bottom, the experience she has acquired of the value of money has not led her to sacrifice everything to her need of it. It is in her class, and in the working-class at large, that disinterestedness, ingenuousness, artless sentiment, a belief in happiness on modest means, emotions which are dying out among the bourgeoisie, still survive, and are cultivated like flowers that persist in blooming in a stony soil.

Here, then, is the working-man free from toil until to-morrow. What use will he make of his too-brief leisure? How will those men who are still brisk and active after a day of labour spend their evenings?

Since he has awakened to a consciousness of his rights, and since the amelioration of his lot by means of mutual understanding, cohesion, and sustained effort has seemed practicable to him, the working-man has applied himself diligently to the advancement of his own interests.

These interests are defended at the *Bourse du Travail*, a vast building in the Rue du Château d'Eau, belonging to the city of Paris. Here most of the working-men's syndicates are held, and hither they flock to seek employ-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.]

ment and to attend lectures, co-operative unions, and entertainments of various sorts.

This institution was founded on February 3, 1887, closed by order of the Government on July 6, 1893, and only reopened on April 11, 1896. Entrance is free from 7 o'clock in the morning until midnight on weekdays, and from 7 a.m. to 6 in the evening on Sundays and holidays. More than 200,000 Parisian workmen are grouped together in 230 allied syndicates. A free intelligence-office is connected with each syndicate, where a permanent secretary, elected and paid by his comrades, is constantly at their service to summon meetings, to furnish the members with information, etc. He is aided by volunteer secretaries, who carry on their several professions during the day.

The great hall devoted to general meetings and lectures is capable of holding 3,500 persons. The reunions are often of a turbulent nature. More than 500 were held in 1906. The *Salle des Grèves* is reserved for the unemployed. It is an underground room, with a roof supported by cast-iron columns, and bears a striking resemblance to a crypt. It was here one evening that a lieutenant of infantry in full uniform laid down his sword on the speaker's desk, and made common cause with the strikers.

The union of syndicates has also instituted a judicial council, which holds its sessions here from 6 to 9 a.m., and from 3 to 6 p.m., and which has been in operation since 1899. Finally, a choir has been recruited from among the children of the members, which lends its

### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

services for entertainments given at the Bourse du Travail.

This organization has been much less before the public eye than its younger sister, the *Confédération Générale du Travail*, which aroused such consternation throughout Paris on May 1, 1906, as almost to equal the terrors of the siege, and which incarnates the Revolution on the march, as opposed to the more conservative branch of the Labour party and to the Republicans in power.

An offshoot of the Congress of Labour, which held its sessions at Limoges in 1895, the *Confédération Générale du Travail* has only been in actual operation since January, 1903. Its aim is to unite all the trade syndicates in a great federation of trade and industry; to maintain active relations between all these syndicates, with a view to co-ordinate action; to serve as a bond between existing labour-unions, and to create new ones; to strengthen labour jurisdiction and free it from political influence; and to uphold the rights of the proletariat on a strictly economic platform.

Expelled from the Bourse du Travail in 1895 by order of the Prefect, the *Confédération Générale du Travail* transferred its headquarters to a building abandoned for business purposes, in a blind alley leading from the Rue Grange aux Belles. Having purchased these premises, the society is now doing its utmost to fit them up suitably as a federation club-house. Meanwhile, not having as yet a hall for meetings, it has established a printing-office for the use of the syndicates and for the weekly organ of the *Confédération*, *La Voix du Peuple*. Finally,



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.

a dispensary has been organized here, which gives daily consultations gratis to a hundred victims of accidents resulting from labour.

The number of working-men affiliated with the *Confédération Générale du Travail* is about 600,000. This constitutes a powerful body, and it is easy to understand the apprehension it arouses among employers, as well as among representatives of the people of the old type, who are amazed at discovering that the dough of labour no longer needs the yeast of electoral eloquence to bring about fermentation.

Those popular universities whose promoters sought to make them a focus of social action, and which were styled at their birth the "cathedrals of democracy," have not fulfilled their lofty promise.

And yet what enthusiasm they aroused at first! People thronged there to listen to eminent lecturers, who explored all the fields of learning simultaneously with more ardour than method and discrimination. Snobbery soon began to mix itself with philanthropy, and the smartest turn-outs were frequently to be seen drawn up before the door of the "Co-operation of Ideas," in the Faubourg St Antoine, which was the most flourishing of the first popular universities. The working-men, on the other hand, generally held aloof, and turned a deaf ear to these desultory talks, confused discussions, and omnivorous lecture-courses. It is probable that ten hours of labour had not prepared them to digest a bill of fare which mingled psychology and the languages, anthropology and literature, law and the philosophy of history, political economy



GARE MONTPARNASSE



### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

and physiology. The popular universities could maintain their hold only upon a handful of employees and minor functionaries, who were thankful for a place in which to spend their evenings at a monthly fee of fifty centimes.

Gradually these universities, destitute of resources, degenerated into little coteries or family clubs in which dramatic performances by amateurs were given, followed by dances,—thus offering attractions which their somewhat incoherent programme of studies did not possess.

The popular universities continue to vegetate to the number of twenty-five, of which fifteen are in Paris and ten in the suburbs; but they threaten to disappear altogether, being absorbed into other institutions for popular education. Several of these have been formed, with more modest pretensions, offering to the people only such intelligent diversion as they are fully able to give. Such, for example, are the *Veillées de Plaisance* where, on Saturday evenings, the workmen's families of the quarter assemble to listen to dramatic lectures, with comments by a poet, Maurice Bouchor, who also conducts choirs of children, and forms their taste at the same time as that of their parents.

A similar aim has inspired another song-writer, M. Chabroux, with the charming idea of creating, exclusively for young working-girls, a sort of minor *Conservatoire* of singing, where, on Wednesday evenings, they are taught a number of the pretty old songs as well as new ones composed for their benefit, in place of the follies and inanities of the day. The meeting-place is a hall in the *Mairie* of the Fourth District, Place Bau-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.

doyer, where great artists often volunteer their services as temporary professors.

We must also mention "L'Œuvre de Mimi Pinson" (christened after a poem by Musset), founded in 1900 by Gustave Charpentier. The author of *Louise* and of the *Coronation of the Muse of the People* was brought up at Turcoing, in the region of factories and cotton-mills, and has from his childhood sympathized keenly with the painful, monotonous, and joyless existence of the labouring classes.

On the occasion of the fiftieth representation of his beautiful lyric poem, he insisted on associating with his triumph the humble sisters of his heroine, and accordingly obtained from the director of the Opéra Comique 300 free tickets for Parisian working-girls. Charpentier hoped that other managers might consent from time to time to follow the example thus set them; but nearly all were of opinion that they bestowed a sufficient number of free tickets already, and they failed to add, as they might have done conformably with truth, that they usually bestowed them in a far less praiseworthy manner, and upon people quite able to pay for their own tickets. A few prominent society-women fortunately took Mimi Pinson under their protection, and by their subscriptions have aided the composer in organizing courses of music and dancing-lessons. These are attended daily by nearly 400 young girls, and the choruses, conducted by the master in person, give frequent performances at the Bourse du Travail, the Trocadéro, the Salle Pleyel, and elsewhere.

### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

Finally, the youth, who on leaving the elementary school at the age of thirteen, is desirous of completing his education, at the same time that he is earning his living, or serving his apprenticeship to a trade, has the choice of some 500 free classes, held in the evening from 8 to 10 and on Sunday morning from 9 to 11 o'clock, at the various schoolrooms and *Mairies*, under the auspices of four great societies—viz., the Philotechnic, the Polytechnic, the Polymathic, and *L'Union Française de la Jeunesse*.

The number of pupils who attend these classes assiduously is estimated at 20,000; they are taught French, arithmetic, drawing, music, book-keeping, and foreign languages. As to industrial courses, it would be tedious to enumerate them. One of the most popular is that of artificial flower-making at the Bourse du Travail, where forewomen from the great shops devote an hour on Monday evenings to instructing numbers of young girls, who come great distances to attend these courses, accompanied by their parents. The girls learn rapidly how to make this article of luxury, and thus qualify themselves for what is one of the most remunerative trades of the day.

From 9 o'clock in the evening work goes on here and there in the immense, ever-active beehive of Paris. The night-gangs in the great factories then take up their service. In the glass-blowing works the yawning mouths of the furnaces light up, with the glare of a conflagration, the faces of the men as they plunge their rods into the crucibles and draw out balls of liquid glass, which they

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.

blow into bubbles and then shape by turning them on a sheet of cast-iron.

At 10 it is time for the bakers, who, having heated their furnaces, begin kneading and moulding the dough in the ovens, which they continue doing until 5 in the morning, when they return home utterly worn-out.

At 11 the night-watchmen in the mills light the braziers, which enable them to support the rigour of the temperature throughout the long nights of winter. Some of them are attended on their ceaseless rounds by a watch-dog, who helps them to protect the tools and copper and lead pipes from tramps and prowlers. A wooden hut serves these poor men as a shelter; they are mostly aged workmen, whose all-night vigils bring them in less than five francs. Nor is the lot more enviable of those women who, throwing a shawl over their heads, hasten at midnight to the printing-offices, where the great rotary machines supplied with mechanical folders have not altogether superseded hand-folding. The newspapers, when folded, are put into wrappers, and for this task, which lasts till 6 in the morning, these poor women receive twenty-five francs per week.

This chapter on the working world would be incomplete if we said nothing of the conditions amid which the working-man finds himself on regaining his home, there to seek rest and recuperation for the struggle of the morrow.

Without entering deeply into the serious question of the unhealthy tenements—in many cases stifling dens—

### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

which are not only among the chief promoters of alcoholism, but factors contributing to the spread of tuberculosis and other deadly maladies, we remark with sadness that 365,000 Parisians still inhabit overcrowded tenements, and that nearly 900,000 others have to content themselves with insufficient lodging-space—that is to say, that out of every 1,000 citizens of Paris, 150 occupy unhealthy quarters, and 360 are cramped for room; and the victims of these deplorable hygienic and moral conditions are found among the class of small employees as well as among workmen. In the faubourgs as many as six persons are often crowded into one room, so that a workman gains nothing by passing from the atmosphere of the workshop into that of his dwelling, where light and air are equally lacking.

Attention was called, some time since, to chambers in the Pointe d'Ivry quarter occupied by nine, eleven, and even fourteen people. Thirty-three per cent of the tenants in Paris pay a rent below 300 francs per annum, and it is in this class that overcrowding produces its worst effects.

The demolitions undertaken for the amelioration of the hygienic conditions of Paris have swept away a certain number of unsound and inadequate tenements and lodging-houses, but there are more than enough remaining.

There are, for instance, in Paris great numbers of masons from Limousin, who sleep in overcrowded tenements in the St Victor quarter. There are also many Savoyards, Auvergnats, Piedmontese, and Belgians em-



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iii.

ployed in house-building, who leave their wives and children behind them in their own country, and who often lodge ten or fifteen in an attic, without any other furniture than the beds or straw-mattresses on the floor.

But besides these robust and sober workmen who come up to Paris from the central plateau of France, there swarm like vermin those poor little Italians, whom an infamous padrone exploits and drives into the streets, to dance, strum the guitar or mandoline, and sell trumpery wares. They formerly swarmed in the Rue Ste Marguerite, in a court called "The Lions' Den," on account of a menagerie which had long been held there. The tenement contained 112 beds, distributed about in four tumble-down buildings, whose mouldy balconies overlooked the court.

The Rue Ste Marguerite no longer exists, and many night-shelters of a similar kind have been demolished in and around the Place Maubert, the Rue Galande, Rue du Fouarre, and Rue des Anglais, where was situated the notorious tavern of the Père Lunette, a rival of the Château Rouge.

There gathered jail-birds, beggars, itinerant musicians, vagabonds of all types, and there also were to be found wretched beings, left alone in the world, penniless and without work, some of them reduced to regretting the hospital which they had just left. All of these classes—the criminals, the do-nothings, and the unfortunates—the "submerged tenth," in short—are to be found to-day in the wretched hovels and drinking-dens hidden

### CH. iii.] OF THE FAUBOURGS

away in the Mouffetard quarter, in the neighbourhood of the *halles*, the Faubourg du Temple, etc.

And now we will leave Paris asleep. It is a light sleep, however—the watcher is aware that at the least sound the slumbering city would awake and spring from her couch ; and, indeed, she will presently arise, the city of light, opening her eyes to the first gleam of dawn, and the faubourgs will stretch out their arms toward her—those sturdy arms which the world of toil withdraws from her each evening, and bends as a pillow beneath a weary head.

## CHAPTER IV

### Of Politics and the Political World

Chamber of Deputies—Luxembourg Palace, the Senate—Hotel de Ville and Elysée Palace—Presidents of the Republic—Jules Grévy, Carnot, Faure and Fallières—Clémenceau—Municipal Council—Federation of Labour

**F**OUR public buildings may be taken as symbols of the political life of Paris—namely the Chamber of Deputies or Palais Bourbon, the Luxembourg or Palace of the Senate, the Hotel de Ville, and the Elysée Palace.

The Chamber of Deputies is situated on the left bank of the Seine, at the southern end of the Pont de la Concorde, facing the Madeleine on the northern shore. It thus forms part of that magnificent ensemble, that marvellous "human" landscape, which, starting at the Louvre, ends at the great triumphal arch erected by the subduer of kings. Nowhere else in the world have builders made use of space on so grand a scale, not even in the avenues which led to the Great Pyramids; and these vast spaces are all the more impressive because the buildings erected upon them, with the exception of the Louvre, are not in themselves of the highest order. The Madeleine and Palais Bourbon, for instance, are mere imitations of a vanished art; the Arc du Carrousel is a somewhat paltry structure; the obelisk is merely a huge stone, borrowed moreover from ancient Egypt. The Arc de Triomphe has undoubtedly a sort of grandeur of its own—perhaps as much as that sort of monument can



DOOR OF THE LUXEMBOURG PALACE



have—but who would compare it for a moment with Notre Dame or the Sainte Chapelle, or even with St Etienne du Mont? The Palais Bourbon has the advantage of an admirable site, and is invested with a certain dignity by the surrounding landscape.

The Luxembourg Palace is a composite edifice, whose first architect, Desbrosses, borrowed some of its features from the Pitti Palace in Florence. Under Louis Philippe two new pavilions, with a connecting wing, were added to the main building. The general effect is agreeable, and has a certain air of peace and serenity, while the beautiful Luxembourg gardens surround it with the charm of old France, and something of the grandeur of Versailles.

The Hotel de Ville is situated on the right bank of the Seine. It was built, as is well known, on the site of the former edifice, destroyed in 1871, during the convulsions of the Commune. The old Hotel de Ville was in the style of the Italian Renaissance, and its architect was probably Dominic of Cortona, surnamed the Boccador. The present building is vaster, and is not devoid of elegance, nor of a certain grandeur, although it is not an architectural *chef-d'œuvre*. The Elysée Palace, formerly called the Palais d'Evreux, is in the Faubourg St Honoré, in the Elysée quarter. Since it became national property, this palace has had a curious history. It served first as a national printing-office, then as the annexe to a public garden. After passing through many hands, it was assigned to Prince Murat, and later to the Emperor Napoleon, who here signed his second abdication, on the day after Waterloo. It next belonged to the Duc and

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iv.]

Duchesse de Berry; and under Louis Philippe it was devoted to the entertainment of distinguished guests, among whom were the Queen of Spain and Mehemet Ali. After the Revolution of 1848, it became the official residence of the Presidents of the Republic, Louis Napoleon having occupied it in that capacity until, upon being proclaimed Emperor, he took up his residence in the Tuileries. During the Second Empire the Elysée received by turns as its guests Queen Victoria, the Sultan Abdul Aziz, and the Emperor of Austria, Francis Joseph. In 1873 the old palace beheld the reappearance of the Presidents of the Republic, who have continued to make it their residence ever since.

It was Marshal MacMahon who opened the series, for the Elysée was only occasionally visited by the little shrill-voiced man, talkative and impatient, who implacably crushed the Commune, and was hailed by the national assembly with the title of Liberator of the Soil—Adolphe Thiers.

MacMahon was succeeded by Jules Grévy, popularly known as Père Grévy, also as Father of Assassins, owing to the fact that he imperturbably pardoned all criminals condemned to death. Hence arose a legend that the bandits of Paris had organized a body-guard, far more efficient than that provided by the Prefect of Police, to watch over the President's safety whenever the fancy seized him to make a tour of the city incognito. It was also reported that Père Grévy carried economy to the point of avarice, and that he retired from his post in possession of extensive savings. For, as everyone knows, he

was forced to retire, under the pressure of public opinion, owing to the scandalous conduct of his son-in-law, Wilson, who had carried on a shameless traffic in Government appointments and decorations. Some of us can still recall the tiresome refrain droned out in all the music-halls, "*Quel malheur d'avoir un gendre !*"

In short, Père Grévy, though an intelligent and worthy man, was neither an ornamental nor a brilliant President; his term of office was not marked by any important acts, and his reputation suffered from his being surrounded by bad advisers.

His successor was Sadi Carnot, a grandson of Lazare Carnot, member of the Convention and victorious general of the First Republic. An excellent President, in spite of a somewhat cold and apathetic temperament, he was an indefatigable visitor of the cities and communes of France, and distinguished for his tact and generosity; but as a statesman he was gifted with only a moderate degree of intelligence and ability, while his stiffness of bearing gave rise to innumerable caricatures and to the comic song, "*Il est en bois, il est en bois !*" He came to a tragic end in 1894 by the brutal dagger of an Italian anarchist.

He was succeeded by Casimir Périer, whose grandfather of the same name was the brilliant Prime Minister of Louis Philippe. Up to the time of his election to the Presidency, Casimir Périer had enjoyed a certain reputation for force and energy. He was a man of strict integrity, with an imperious bearing and a manner so curt at times as to border on insolence. During his brief term of office he showed himself weak and vacillating, and



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iv.

dissensions having broken out between him and the party leaders, he sent in his resignation at the end of a few months, leaving behind him a doubtful reputation for strength of character and political ability.

Félix Faure, who succeeded him, was the decorative figure *par excellence* in the presidential chair. He was a man whose colossal stature entitled him to rank in the category of giants. He made extensive official journeys all over France, gave brilliant fêtes and entertainments, and contributed greatly to the successful conclusion of the Franco-Russian Alliance. He received as his guests the Russian Admiral Avellane, and subsequently the Czar and Czarina, on which occasion the festivities were among the most dazzling on record. Later he paid a visit to Russia, where he was received with unbounded enthusiasm. It was during his presidency that the Sovereigns of Europe, both Kings and Queens, resumed, officially, the habit of visiting Paris and France. He died suddenly, and under somewhat enigmatical circumstances (enigmatical at least for official historians, though the real facts in regard to his death were speedily known to all Paris). Everyone recalls his imposing presence, his martial cast of countenance, the simple frankness of his manners, and his generosity, which equalled that of Sadi Carnot.

Emile Loubet, his successor, bore no resemblance to him in any respect. He was a small man with a shrewd expression and no dignity of bearing. He was, in fact, the typical *bonhomme*, the man of easy good-humour tinged with joviality. Paris, which was just then an intensely

Boulangist and Nationalist Paris, gave him a terrible reception. While his carriage was on the way to the Elysée, he was overwhelmed by the rabble with a torrent of ribaldry, coarse derision, insults, and even threats. Some of the newspapers proceeded to aggravate the insult, and the new President saw himself described as a sinister bandit, an ignoble blackguard, and a foul Panamist, according to the choice language of the day. Under this storm of obloquy he never flinched, and by dint of calm good-nature, good sense, and a smiling demeanour, he ended by winning popularity. At the conclusion of his term of office, both parties in the House, and the nation as well, wished to maintain him in power ; but he renounced the presidency formally and without appeal. The chief event of his "reign" was the reception of their Majesties Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, when the statesman who is the present Sovereign of Great Britain came to us bringing in his hands the *entente cordiale*. The people of Paris gave its royal guests a delirious reception, equalling in material splendour that of the Czar and Czarina, and exceeding it by an indescribable something more intimate and affectionate, resulting from the great personal popularity of the King.

Our last President, the present occupant of the Elysée, is M. Armand Fallières, of whom we will first give the biography as presented succinctly in official hand-books.

Monsieur Fallières was born at Mézin, in the department of Lot et Garonne, on November 6, 1841. He graduated at the law-schools of Toulouse and Paris, and

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iv.

was received as barrister at the Nérac Bar, where he won a high reputation and formed a circle of devoted friends. He was appointed Mayor of Nérac, and Conseiller-Général in 1870. Upon the fall of Thiers, the Government of Moral Order deprived him of his office on political grounds; but he was none the less elected Deputy in 1876, and four years later became Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of the Interior and of Worship. In 1883 he was appointed President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Public Instruction until 1885. He was again Minister of the Interior in 1887; Minister of Justice from 1887 to 1888; returned to the Ministry of Public Instruction from 1889 to 1890, and to that of Justice from 1890 to 1892. He remained Senator from the Haute Garonne from 1890 until his presidential election in 1906, being chosen President of the Senate when M. Loubet exchanged that presidency for the Elysée. Finally, M. Fallières saw himself raised to the presidency of the Republic on January 17, 1906.

As we perceive, his has been a well-filled career. In all his varied functions, Fallières has shown himself full of good sense and judgment—a judicious rather than a brilliant man, endowed with an essentially happy and sympathetic nature. On the eve of his election everybody knew that he would attain the highest office in the State—“in an armchair,” as they say in the slang of the turf of a horse which is an easy winner. Our President is decidedly corpulent; the lines of his face are at once firm and mild; his eye expresses benevolence not unmixed with irony, and his glance is keen and thoughtful by turns, re-



ARCHIVES NATIONALES



vealing gravity and energy of character, as well as gaiety and humour. There is refinement in his smile, but something in his face suggests that he is not averse to the pleasures of the table, and does not disdain his glass of wine upon occasion.

M. Fallières is, in fact, a vine-grower, and is still devoted to the culture of his vineyards of Loupillon, where he raises a good light wine.

The history of M. Fallières' presidency, so far, is in perfect harmony with his previous record—it is the presidency of a lucky man. He entered upon his office under the most favourable auspices, in marked contrast with Félix Faure, who assumed his in the midst of the Panama agitation, and Emile Loubet, who ascended the presidential chair amid a shower of obloquy. Fallières, on the other hand, came into office at the moment when Nationalism had been crushed all over France—a most important circumstance for a President. His election did not, indeed, arouse a frenzy of enthusiasm, nor does he yet enjoy an excessive degree of popularity, but he has been favourably received and cordially treated so far by his people. As to his political rôle, he remains somewhat in the background. Doubtless he contributes to the Cabinet Councils his spirit of conciliation, his optimistic logic, and his graciousness of manner ; but at this period, when Ministries whose tenure of office was formerly so insecure have become singularly stable, he is rarely called upon to act.

M. Fallières confines himself, therefore, to receiving an occasional Sovereign, and manifesting a sympathetic in-

## 'THE COLOUR OF PARIS' [CH. iv.

terest in his good towns and cantons—an interest shown by donations bestowed upon the poor, and decorations distributed among the notables; also by conveying to the inundated districts kind words and cordial assistance.

Nevertheless, the times are serious: Morocco is bristling with ambuscades, Collectivism and Militarism are agitating the urban masses and even the remote rural districts; and, meanwhile, M. Fallières can do nothing but fold his arms, sign decrees, listen to the speeches of the terrible Clémenceau and the subtle Briand, give the prescribed receptions, invite distinguished guests to dine at the Elysée, and see to it that the viands are hot and the wines cool.

In doing these things his rôle is not a useless one: his cordial greeting, his acuteness, his mild philosophy, produce a favourable impression upon the European celebrities who visit him. Within the limits of his power he works for peace, and strives to bring about the courteous solution of differences. Assuredly he is not an Edward VII—in the first place because he does not diffuse about him that subtle influence that emanates from the King or England and Emperor of India, and also because he has not received from Heaven those peculiar gifts which constitute a statesman and a diplomat. M. Fallières is essentially a political man, a parliamentarian endowed with tact and intelligence; this is a great deal, and it is all that is necessary to make an excellent President. Perhaps a great statesman in that position would be more embarrassing than useful.

Next to M. Fallières, whom his especial functions condemn to a rôle which, if not passive, is at least but discreetly active, comes the tangible head of French politics, M. Georges Clémenceau. It is not an easy task to sketch the portrait or pen the biography of this singularly complex and supremely intelligent man.

Georges Clémenceau is of Vendean race, and that race has transmitted to him its intense combativeness and its imperious temperament. The Clémenceaus are an active, satirical, lively, and aggressive family, who have shown remarkable brain-power for several generations. Georges Clémenceau's father was a man dreaded by his opponents, full of generous social ideas, but totally destitute of religious belief; and his sons, Georges, Albert, and Paul, resemble him intellectually. Our Premier, after having taken his degree of M.D., promptly turned his attention to politics. We find him already Mayor of Montmartre in 1870, but it is as the chief of the Radical party that he has exercised a decisive influence upon the destinies of his country.

This small sallow man, with harsh features, a short nose, and incisive jaw, prompt in repartee and always ready with stinging epithets, was long the terror of the Cabinet—the Warwick who made whole generations of Ministers tremble. His first onslaught was on the powerful Gambetta, and the struggle between these two was epic. Gambetta, gifted with all the charms and power of eloquence, an admirable leader of popular assemblies, prompt to see his opportunity, and joining to



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iv.

the art of finished oratory quickness in retort and a humour by turns witty and formidable, came into constant collision with this obstinate, censorious rival, who was as well-equipped for parliamentary fencing as for the expression of general ideas.

Clémenceau overthrew Gambetta.

He next attacked Jules Ferry, the struggle this time being carried on less directly. Little skilled in prompt retorts, a trifle stiff and even clumsy in fence, Ferry retrieved himself in his premeditated speeches, and above all in his acts. The battle was fought out upon the burning question of Indo-China, where Brière de l'Isle and Négrier, at the head of the land forces, with Admiral Courbet, an excellent leader, in command of the fleet, were waging a hard-fought campaign. Ferry, a colonizer by conviction, stubbornly maintained a policy of aggrandizement against the Extreme Left, which regarded all distant conquests as useless and dangerous. Clémenceau perpetually returned to the charge, but for a long time the actual victory was with the Ministry. It would perhaps have remained with them—at least, upon colonial grounds—had it not been for the Langson incident. This check, designedly magnified by the Opposition, and easily reparable, appeared at the time an appalling catastrophe. An immense crowd besieged the Palais Bourbon, demanding the dismissal of the Ministry, and shouting, "Down with Ferry." Inside the hall the drama was no less violent, Clémenceau pouring forth a torrent of bitter and vindictive words and frantic insults directed against the Minister, while the giant—Ferry was of tall stature



STATUE OF GAMBETTA



and solidly built—after attempting a timid defence, gave way before his implacable little adversary and before the mob, and retired by a side-door.

After Jules Ferry, Clémenceau attacked Brisson, and was again triumphant. He seemed about to attain the climax of his power, when the Boulanger crisis supervened. Everyone remembers that surprising craze, when whole provinces were seized with a fanatical devotion towards a man whom no one actually knew, and whose only titles to glory consisted in having welcomed with favour the invention of melinite, and having maintained a courageous attitude at the time of the Schnaebele incident. The populace also admired his black horse and his fine bearing, which, however, was more graceful than martial.

The most curious feature of the affair was that Clémenceau should have been one of the General's "promoters." As soon, however, as he became aware of the turn Boulangerism was taking; as soon as he perceived that a throng of reactionaries were hastening to greet the rising star, he suddenly made a right-about-face, and directed all his eloquence and strategy towards the defence of the Republic. It may be said that, with the aid of Constant, a diplomat of the first rank, Clémenceau dealt the final blows against the Boulanger Staff. He was destined, however, to encounter defeat in his turn. The Panama scandal suddenly burst forth, sinister, demoralizing, and at the same time comic. There appeared upon the scene the amazing silhouettes of Cornelius Herz, Baron Reinach, and d'Arton, adventurers who had corrupted the Cham-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iv.

bers by the distribution of cheques and specie, and a whole parliamentary group was compromised, especially by the famous stubs in d'Arton's cheque-book.

Meanwhile, the remnants of the Boulanger party, transformed into Nationalists, made a vigorous effort to reconquer power, and succeeded at least in conquering Paris. Clémenceau saw himself implicated, without a shadow of proof, and calumniated in his private as well as his public life. Thrown over by his electors and reduced to absolute poverty, he was obliged to resort to journalism and literature to earn his living. He did it with supreme *maëstria*. In his leading articles, essays and stories, he revealed himself as the most complex of mortals, thoroughly versed in ideas and facts, and more gifted as a literary artist than any political man of Old or New France. But especially admirable was his intrepidity. He showed himself such as he had always been—by turns authoritative and good-natured, sometimes incisive and sometimes humorous, now charging upon the enemy with head lowered, and now stopping to fire a pleasantry at him. He appeared in his writing, as in his speeches, with his simple correctness of style, his tireless curiosity, which carried him into every nook and corner of the great city, his insatiable interest in science, history, the arts, the gossip of the day, the great events of the planet, in a jovial talk or a philosophical discussion. He triumphed, pen in hand, as he had triumphed at the Palais Bourbon. He knew how to be the private citizen after having been the man of crowds; and now that he is Prime Minister, he certainly cannot regret having

known this turn of fortune; his career would have been incomplete without it.

It was the Dreyfus affair which set him in the saddle again. He was one of the prime movers in that ardent struggle carried on by the champions of rehabilitation against the party of hatred. He dealt the anti-Dreyfusites the most crushing blows, and was able to add to his triumphs the liberation of the little Jewish officer exiled to Devil's Island. On his election to the Senate he reassumed his political harness with a trifle more moderation but with equal spirit, until his promotion, first to the Sarrien Cabinet, and finally to being himself the head of a long-lived Ministry.

As Prime Minister, he has shown no more surprise at his destiny than he did on being reduced to a struggle for his daily bread. He preserves his wonted bearing and the astounding youthfulness of his movements. He is as brusque, as curt, as jovial as ever, and continues to berate and jeer at his adversaries, and even his friends, as in the past.

He wrestles with the Government offices, and abruptly dismisses recalcitrant or idle functionaries. He fights against favouritism, making but slight account of protégés and *fils à papa*. He threatens incapable Prefects and lazy Sub-Prefects, and obliges them to fill their posts effectually and to renounce too frequent trips to Paris at the expense of the Government. On the other hand, alas ! he sees himself constrained at times to make war on that liberty which was so dear to him when he was contending with the ruling powers. He has been obliged

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iv.

to send troops against the miners, against the vine growers of the South, where sanguinary struggles have taken place, and against the "manifestants" of May 1. He was forced to order the condemnation of the C.G.T. (General Confederation of Labour) and of the anti-Militarists, the famous Hervé among them, and he was constrained to send troops to Morocco on one of those campaigns which he used to execrate—and doubtless execrates still—and on a campaign besides which is perhaps without issue. He has, therefore, christened himself with joyous irony "Emperor of the Flics" (that is, of the police), acknowledging that events are more powerful than individuals, and that a Minister, driven by the irresistible force of things, cannot always live up to his principles.

He is quite capable, on occasion, of replying smartly to interpellations, and of aiming a barbed arrow by way of retort. He talks familiarly and sardonically to the reporters who besiege him, and it seems that he sometimes plays on them one of those practical jokes for which he has always had so keen a relish. His friends, his co-editors, his parliamentary colleagues—all recall these pranks, which usually preceded or followed some particularly stormy session. The case of Père X is typical, inasmuch as it cost M. Clémenceau dear—it cost him, in fact, nothing less than the presidency of the Chambers. This Père X was an old parliamentarian, a greybeard who dated back to the prescriptions of the Empire. He was noted for his dishevelled appearance, his mania for trotting in the middle of the street instead of on the side-



PONT D' IENA





walk, and his economy, which bordered on avarice. This worthy gentleman made a practice of taking one meal a day gratis at the bar of the Chamber of Deputies, where he liked also to provide himself with a second meal by stuffing the capacious pockets of his ancient overcoat with various articles of food, especially rolls which are easy to carry. Accordingly, one morning, having breakfasted at the bar, he was busily filling the above-mentioned pockets with the rolls left upon the plate, when M. Clémenceau chanced to pass. Arrested by this spectacle, after pausing for a moment to gaze at it, his sense of humour was aroused, and, approaching with stealthy tread, he began quietly and dexterously removing the rolls from Père X's pockets. The old gentleman continued stuffing them in, but, gradually becoming conscious that his pockets did not fill, he turned, and caught M. Clémenceau in the act. Too much mortified and irritated for words, he inwardly swore to be even with him. The occasion soon arrived on Clémenceau's presenting himself as candidate for the presidency of the Chamber in opposition to M. Méline. The contest was so close that one vote alone would turn the scale, and this vote was that of Père X. Being opposed to Méline politically, he would not cast a vote for him at any price, but he could abstain. He therefore cast a blank ballot, and, in accordance with the custom in such cases, the presidency was allotted to M. Méline, who was the senior. Thus it was that Clémenceau paid Père X for his rolls.

By a freak of parliamentary fortune, the Minister next in the public eye after the Premier is M. Aristide Briand.

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iv.

Monsieur Briand is a Breton, a man with a shrewd countenance, and very precise in speech. He knows what he wants at the moment he wants it, but feels quite free to change his mind whenever circumstances alter ; for M. Briand is not a Breton to the point of being incapable of evolution. He believes less in principle than in hard facts, and considers that what is excellent to-day may be harmful to-morrow. In this sense he is a disciple of Lamarck and Darwin. He first presented himself under a somewhat forbidding aspect, extolling agitation, urging a general strike, and resolutely anti-Nationalist. But, as with all reasonable beings, experience gave him a more correct notion of the times ; and without ceasing to be a Socialist in doctrine, he yielded to the inevitable, and proceeded, as the expression goes, to mix much water with his wine.

The hour of his fortune struck when the separation of Church and State was brought about. M. Briand it was who drew up the formula which was judged the most felicitous for settling the problems involved in the new statute relating to the clergy ; and he displayed therein much wisdom, adroitness, and eloquence. Accordingly, when M. Clémenceau formed his Cabinet, he sought the collaboration of this skilful parliamentarian, and M. Briand was called to the Ministry of Public Instruction, Fine Arts, and Worship. He made a favourable impression from the first, and the day came when, after a speech perfect in form and logic, he appeared fully the equal of his redoubtable chief. But in spite of prodigies of diplomacy, he was unable to bring about an understanding

with Rome. The Pope refused with scorn to acknowledge the "Associations of Worship" to which M. Briand wished to hand over the churches, their furnishings and property. Fresh measures accordingly had to be adopted, resistance offered to clerical outbreaks, tame as these were on the whole, and the money of the establishment handed over to the State Board of Charities. M. Briand resigned himself to this course, not without chagrin, for he would greatly have preferred conciliatory measures. Recently the young Minister has exchanged the office of Chief of Public Instruction for that of the Department of Justice, to which has been adjoined that of Worship. It may be regarded as certain that he will fill his new post with perfect tact.

M. Briand disguises his shrewdness under a simple and benevolent exterior; he is a spontaneous yet eloquent talker, and his somewhat harsh voice is not displeasing. He is free from petty vanity, and does not forget that he was once poor—an obscure young lawyer waiting for clients—and acquainted with the attendant trials of privation and actual want. He is fond of literature and art, and is often to be met at the theatres, and even in the green-room. He prefers actresses to actors, and the pretty ones to those who are not so.

The next member of the Ministry to attract public attention is M. Caillaux, Minister of Finance, for the reason that he has shown a disposition to impose an income-tax upon France. The Socialists and Radicals applauded this measure, but all capitalists and men in office tremble at the project, fearing the turn of the screw. M. Caillaux

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iv.

is especially famous for his methods of testing incomes, as these tests are rehearsals of what will happen when the tax is actually decreed. He sends his agents about among the communes to collect information as to the means of the inhabitants, who invariably meet these inquiries with evasions, lies, and a general beating about the bush. His investigations accordingly reveal nothing positive in regard to taxable incomes, and M. Caillaux, meanwhile, is made the object of much music-hall wit. In anticipation of the panic which this Minister is expected to cause, French capital pours into Swiss, Belgian, and British banks, and French fortunes seek to make themselves invisible and undiscoverable. It is not so much that the citizen regards the income-tax as worse than other taxes, but he claims that in France it would merely serve to despoil the well-to-do classes without profit to others. For, since the plan is to spare the small incomes, the small salaries, the low wages, and even the fairly good wages, the majority of electors, being thus exempted from paying this tax, will look on with indifference while the Budget is squandered and duties are raised.

Finally, there is a fourth Minister who excites the public interest and curiosity—this is General Picquart, the Minister for War. M. Picquart, who was of Alsatian origin, is a man of fine bearing, a delightful talker, many-sided, and intelligent, who became a celebrity at the time of the Dreyfus case. In fact, M. Picquart was the real hero of that great trial. He contended heroically against his chiefs and against his comrades; he defended justice at the peril of his career, and perhaps of



BRIDGE OF THE CHEMIN DE FER DE L'OUEST



his life; he endured insults, unpopularity, and imprisonment. But the hour of victory came at last, and in the course of a few short months Colonel Picquart rose to be Brigadier-General, General of Division, and finally Minister for War. He now appears to be resting on his laurels. He brought to the Ministry his refinement, his elegance and geniality; but circumstances, or possibly his own will, have made him a silent personage in public affairs, and a Minister who is not known by his acts. This silence and discretion, however, may conceal useful and solid achievements.

The other Ministers are not much in the public eye, not even M. Vivian, who is at the head of a new Ministry—that of Labour—and who is, besides, an active and brilliant man: he awaits his hour. Nor is M. Barthou well known, except by the fact that he descends pluckily into the mines on the day following a great catastrophe; nor M. Simyan, Under-Secretary of State for the Post Office, Telegraph and Telephone Service, in which character he is daily sworn at by millions of his fellow-citizens on the receipt of a long-delayed letter or an undecipherable telegram; nor yet M. Doumergue, who has just been appointed to the Department of Public Instruction; nor M. Pichon, although he presides over that of Foreign Affairs; nor Messrs. Ruau, Dujardin Beaumetz, and Thomson, more than one of whom is doubtless destined to make a figure later. Everything comes to him who waits, and they are waiting. As for M. Cruppi, he is of yesterday, but may also be destined to play a brilliant part.



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iv.]

Let us pass from the Ministry to the Chamber. This centre and soul of French politics presents a strange scene at times—strange in its moods of fantastic nonchalance, strange in its frenzied agitation. There are days when everything appears to be dead or dying, when some orator or other, possibly even a distinguished specialist, seems to be addressing the seats rather than the deputies, as the hall is five-sixths, or nine-tenths, or nineteen-twentieths empty. How many speeches have been delivered before an audience of a score or so of deputies, all in a somnolent condition or absorbed in meditation over their domestic affairs! And this is sometimes the case at important business sessions, which are given up to arid calculations and arrays of figures. How many times the learned economist X or orator Y famed for his monotonous delivery, or orator Z, equally distinguished as a bore, have risen to their feet, and immediately the house has become empty as if by magic! The deputies, meanwhile, are engaged in gossiping in the lobbies, or crowding round the bar, where they interchange news and jokes, plans and confidences, while X, Y, and Z are reeling off their eloquence to empty benches and a group of yawning reporters.

In marked contrast with these soporific occasions are the stormy, the cyclonic, the earthquake sessions. The hall is then crammed to its utmost capacity: every face is pale or flushed, convulsed with excitement or distorted with a sneer; every voice is raised in a shriek or a roar; deputies hammer their desks or shake furious fists in each others' faces; sarcasms and insults fly

back and forth, and fierce invectives are hurled from extreme Right to extreme Left, and *vice versâ*. M. Coustand, the Collectivist member from Ivry, falls foul of M. Lasies, and gets as good as he gives; M. Baudry d'Asson threatens to assail the orator on the stand—a threat which he carried into execution on one occasion with a boarding-axe; the Revolutionary group to a man threatens to come to blows with the Conservatives; and any orator whose voice is not powerful, or whose authority is not great, is drowned in this deafening uproar.

These are the times that bring out the leaders of the Chamber—those who dominate by their eloquence, or by their knowledge of crowds and their strategic instinct. Then M. Jaurès comes to the front, with his frank, bearded countenance and his thundering voice—a marvellous wielder of words and phrases, who would scale the whole gamut of eloquence if only he possessed the gift of irony; but in spite of his being from the *Midi*, where jest and repartee abound, this eminently French quality is denied him. Then rises M. Ribot with a less powerful voice, a less warm and supple phrase, and less mimetic power, but subtle, adroit, and sagacious. Next comes the turn of M. Camille Pelletan, mordant and abrupt, fiery and romantic, agitating his short arms and waving his leonine locks. Another leader is M. Millebrand, a consummate tactician, precise and obstinate, full of good sense and practical information.

Still another is Comte Albert de Mun, whose eloquence approaches that of M. Jaurès himself, and whose

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iv.]

fame would be far greater if he belonged to the Radical or Socialist party instead of adhering to the extreme Right. Then there is M. Deschanel, tolerant and elegant, with finished speech, refined gesture, and great elevation of thought, who, with a trifle more of magnetism and passion, would have attained the rank to which his merits entitle him, and to whom a great destiny was so long predicted that his enemies say spitefully, "What a great future he has behind him!" And M. Clémenceau, vehement, hot-tempered, and sardonic; M. Briand, attentive and vigilant, logical and adroit, able to unwind with patient skill the most tangled skein of contradictions; and M. Doumer, who is not popular at present, and who only gains hold of his auditors by a sort of authority at once forcible and patient. There are others whom it would be idle to enumerate, whose influence is more or less transient, or is already on the wane; others still who have had their day without a morrow, and whom chance or circumstance permitted to emerge for one short hour above the tumultuous throng.

The Senate, if it permits itself occasional violent scenes, indulges in these much more rarely, and its tempests never rise to the same pitch of intensity as those of the Chamber. Our conscript fathers are at once more patient in listening to an insipid orator, and less passionate when a troublesome question stirs the assembly. The Senate has, indeed, its fits of apathy and of anger, and can show itself at times as inconsistent, unfair, and unreasonable as a faded elderly beauty. On the whole, however, it fulfils its modest rôle of acting as a curb upon the

Chamber, and preventing it from assuming too many bravado airs or moving at too rapid a pace.

But this august body does not engross a large share of public attention, in spite of having in its ranks several political men of the highest eminence, such as M. Raymond Poincaré, a man of universal knowledge, a powerful and brilliant lawyer, and a clear-sighted statesman, who, with Rouvier, is the person most capable of filling the post of Minister of Finance. Then there is Rouvier himself, ardent and able, who made such an epical defence when accused of complicity in the Panama scandals; Freycinet, frail, supremely active, and marvellously intelligent, surnamed the "White Mouse" on account of his short stature and trotting gait; Combes, the *petit père* (ex-priest), and overthrower of the religious orders; Léon Bourgeois, philosopher as well as politician, a sage, who would have shown to greater advantage in less troublous times; finally, Waddington, a clever diplomat, whom recent events have thrown somewhat into the shade.

The Municipal Council is at present in a state of calm amounting almost to placidity. The time is past when Nationalists and Socialists shook their fists in each other's faces, and continually threatened to come to blows. To-day Nationalism has succumbed to the law to which all conquerors are subject, and has split into the Radical Bloc, the Socialist party, and the Radical Socialists. The Hotel de Ville remains a good indicator of the political situation in Paris, and of the relative strength of the various parties in the heart of France. Generally speak-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. iv.

ing however, at the roulette table of the Hotel de Ville red is the winning colour, and it was, consequently, a surprise to the whole country when the Right was triumphant for several sessions running.

Below the political centres which we have pointed out there exist groups, leagues, and clubs whose name is legion, but whose movements are only clearly apparent at election time. Then men rise out of dark corners to sustain or defeat the various candidates, and multitudes throng their customary meeting-places or pommel each other in the courtyards of the communal schools. Individuals hitherto unknown enjoy for a brief space the glory and discomfort of playing the popular tribune, and reaping alternate hootings and applause, most of them subsiding immediately afterwards into their original obscurity, though a few reveal themselves and become the lucky candidates of to-morrow or the next day.

Finally, in addition to these normal agglomerations, a new party has lately been formed, a party opposed to electoral action, which points the finger of scorn at the Chambers, jeers at the Ministry, and despises the State, and whose influence upon politics is a factor to be reckoned with. This is the Syndicalist party, with its federations growing more numerous each day, and its central staff, the General Confederation of Labour. This party counts on carrying on its reforms without recourse to politicians, and, if possible, by opposition to them. It boasts of being as hostile to political Socialists as to any other existing party, and despises the leaders like Jules Guesde, Viviani, and Vaillant, who claim that Social-



PLACE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE



ism must secure power through parliamentary action as well as by revolution.

The Confederation of Labour holds its meetings in a tumble-down building situated in a picturesque, populous quarter not far from the Canal St Martin. There are to be met a group of men, risen from the people, nervous and ardent, ready to wage an incessant warfare—men whose dream it is to bring about a universal strike, a strike of all the trades, in town and country, ending in the expropriation of the well-to-do middle-class.

Perhaps the most striking figure connected with this movement is that of Victor Griffuehles, a young man with eyes hollowed by fever, a hoarse voice, and abrupt gestures, who carries on an incessant crusade against employers, who preaches the Holy War in his newspaper, *La Voix du Peuple*, and who has just opened a furious campaign against Jules Guesde, the Socialist leader and rival of Jaurès, in whom he sees the worst enemy of Syndicalism. This campaign promises to bring about shortly a deep breach in the very heart of the Revolutionary party.



## CHAPTER V

### Of the Theatre

The Comédie Française—The Odéon—The Opéra—The Théâtre Antoine—The Renaissance—Actor-Managers—M. Guitry and Mme. Réjane—Theatre Hats—The Censorship—The Claque—A Triumph—The People's Theatre

“**W**HY do you write for the theatre? What do you find so tempting in that big wooden box packed with layer upon layer of worthy souls straight from their dinners, and sweltering in the close air, while some terrible drama is shaking them up, racking, flurrying, dumbfounding, and bewildering them? They perspire, these good people, they shed tears; and all the while the big drama goes on groaning, wailing, stamping, and roaring until the curtain falls, and the worthy souls go home to bed, and probably to a fit of indigestion. Don't meddle with the foot-lights, it is an unhealthy business. And then how you will be interpreted! Have you ever seen them play Beaumarchais on a Sunday at the Théâtre Français? There ought to be a law forbidding actors to touch masterpieces; they only prevent their being understood.” Thus speaks De Rémonville, a character in *Charles Demailly*, the clever novel of Edmond and Jules de Goncourt.

This tirade (which would be very effective on the stage, by the way) is as just as it is witty. But we must reconcile ourselves to facts; and it is undeniable that Parisians love the theatre more and more, and spend ever larger sums upon it. Paris adores and enriches her dra-

## CH. V.] OF THE THEATRE

matic artists, some of whom are among the best in the world. And these artists, in spite of what De Rémonville says, treat masterpieces with the greatest reverence. They respect the classics, and *sometimes* even play them. The Comédie Française does not indulge too frequently in Beaumarchais nor in Racine. Are they badly interpreted? Who can say? They are still a tradition, but it is the box-office receipts which give the law. The aim nowadays is not to perform masterpieces, but pieces which will draw big houses. Every play that is produced might have for its sub-title *La Question d'Argent*, or might, indeed, borrow the name of one of the greatest recent successes at the Comédie Française, *Les Affaires sont les Affaires* (Business is Business). This happened, moreover, to be that rare exception—a really good play. The theatres only live by hundred-night plays, and the authors know this but too well. They know that they can earn less by their best books than by a poor play which is not even a success. That is why they all rush headlong for the stage. All that is asked of them is to write plays that will take with the public. They accordingly manufacture them by the dozen, sometimes alone, sometimes two or three together, and they go on manufacturing them without pause. As soon as an author has caught the trick his fortune is made. Paris counts among its manufacturers of plays several who have a European reputation. It is easy, therefore, to understand why it is only the first success that costs, and that to get one's first play produced has become almost an impossibility.

Let us imagine a young man who has just finished his

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. V.

three-act play. To what theatre shall he offer it? He thinks at once of the Comédie Française. Formerly this theatre had two readers and a reading-committee. A play was first submitted to one of these readers, who reported whether it was worthy or unworthy of the honour of being read before the committee, which consisted of several members of this distinguished company. The reading committee has now been suppressed. Such an examination would be merely a humiliating ordeal for authors who have already won their spurs. There has, indeed, been some talk latterly of reviving the committee, but meantime it is the director of the Comédie Française, M. Jules Claretie, who reads and accepts or refuses all plays.

Our young man's play will presumably be refused. He then carries it to the second Théâtre Français, the Odéon. There is still a reading-committee at the Odéon, but a much less famous, less terrifying and powerful one than that of the Français. It remains discreetly in the background, and is very rarely consulted, the acceptance or refusal of plays being practically in the hands of the manager, at present M. Antoine. That of our young man will probably be refused.

He proceeds to carry it to the Vaudeville, the Gymnase, the Variétés, the Nouveautés, the Renaissance, etc. It will certainly be refused everywhere. There is no conceivable reason why a manager should accept the first work of an unknown author. Managers have too much to do; they would indeed have to be unoccupied, or desperate, to cast a glance at a bulky manuscript which



THE THÉÂTRE FRANÇAIS

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## CH. V.] OF THE THEATRE

presents itself with no other introduction than that of the registered post. Every theatre has its own recognized authors, and the manager orders his plays for the season from his regular purveyors. He counts on producing only two or three pieces a year, and if he announces others, it is through mock-modesty; he really hopes to present two or three, at the outside, and his dream is of one play to run the entire season, with which he can open and close the doors of his theatre.

There are some hypocritical managers who condescend to reply to the novice, the dramatic "wandering minstrel," who sends them his play. They reply naturally by a refusal, but they temper it with reasons. Their formulæ are not of infinite variety; one can easily divine them. Certain managers carry duplicity to the length of cutting the string of the manuscript; but the sincere and honest manager makes no reply: he leaves it to the author to reclaim his piece when he sees fit.

It is only, therefore, an invincible taste for the improbable which leads us to assume that a first play has been accepted. By what happy chance, who can say? At what theatre? We cannot give it a name. We proceed, however, to mention the principal theatres of Paris, where it might be desirable that such a miracle should occasionally take place.

*Comédie Française.*—This is the most familiar name for the Théâtre Français, which is also called the Français for short, while to the initiated it is the "House of Molière." Its present director, M. Jules Claretie, wrote to the poet Edmond Rostand: "When

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. v.]

you give us the 'House of Lovers,' we will illuminate the 'House of Molière.'" This poetic fashion of accepting a play in verse must naturally be exceptional.

The Comédie Française, founded by order of Louis XIV, dates from 1680. It was the theatre of Talma and Rachel, and its past has made it the leading stage of France. It constitutes a company, to which the State furnishes a theatre, a subsidy of 240,000 francs, and a director. Two evenings in the week are reserved for subscribers, and on Thursdays and Sundays matinées are given. Its repertory, both classic and modern, affords delight to all Frenchmen of distinction, whether belonging to the world of fashion or to that of intellect and culture, and charms provincials and foreigners as well. There is a certain air about the house, extending even to the box-openers—a certain tone which young authors must begin by assimilating. Partly destroyed by fire on March 8, 1900, the Comédie Française was rebuilt without irrelevant modern improvements.

*Odéon.*—The second Théâtre Français draws a subsidy of only 100,000 francs. Isolated on all sides, like the Opéra, it has only been burnt down twice. At present it is under the management of Antoine, the founder of the Théâtre Libre and Théâtre Antoine, who is making prodigious efforts to maintain and increase its high standing, but who has to contend against such obstacles as its remote situation, the hard times, and the stock jokes at the expense of the Odéon, which never fail to raise a laugh. Antoine constantly presents great literary

## CH. V.] OF THE THEATRE

spectacles on its vast stage, where he seeks to widen the sphere of the classics, and to rejuvenate Corneille, Racine, Molière. To this theatre, which resembles a classic temple, he welcomes all the modern schools, and gives literary *matinées* with lectures on Thursdays to a select audience of students and *littérati*. In short, Antoine's heroic efforts to revive the Odéon are in themselves a glorious spectacle.

We question sometimes whether the first and second Théâtre Français do not interfere with each other by too great similarity. Might not the former confine itself to presenting classic masterpieces and those modern plays which have made a brilliant success at some other theatre, the Comédie Française thus giving them the final sanction? In this way it would become a sort of stage museum—a dramatic Louvre, as it were—while the Odéon could be reserved for bringing out new productions. We throw out this as a suggestion; but while making it, we must admit that the classics, even those of yesterday, cannot keep a theatre alive. The artists of the Comédie Française already complain that they earn less money than the boulevard companies, though they make up for it during those long absences from their own theatre which they call their *tournées*. If, however, their theatre were to be transformed into a sort of conservatoire, rich in *chefs-d'œuvre* and poor in receipts, they might never come back to it.

*Opéra*.—Since its foundation the Opéra has occupied twelve different buildings, and has been burned down threetimes. The present theatre, designed by the architect



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. V.]

Charles Garnier, is considered the finest in the world; and its grand staircase is as famous, from another point of view, as its green-room or its ballet. Happy the man for whom that green-room has no secrets, and who can distinguish between a *gargouillade* and a pirouette! This palace of song and dance cost the sum of 34,000,000 francs. The Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts appoints the managers, who are at present Messrs. Messenger, Broussan, and Lagarde. They receive from the State an annual subvention of 800,000 francs, on condition of complying with a set of specifications, of which the opening clause is as follows: "The managers shall bind themselves to conduct the Opéra with the dignity and éclat befitting our greatest national lyric theatre. The Opéra must always be distinguished from other theatres by the choice and variety of works, ancient and modern, presented there, and by the talent of the artists, as well as by the taste and artistic merit of its decorations, costumes, and scenery." Surely the least that could be asked!

*Opéra Comique*.—The second French musical stage, subsidized to the amount of 140,000 francs. Even the guide-books have ceased to call it the theatre for marriageable girls, and everyone agrees that M. Albert Carré is an incomparable stage-setter.

*Théâtre Antoine*.—This theatre succeeded on September 30, 1897, to the Théâtre Libre, founded about 1885 by the actor Antoine (the present manager of the Odéon), in the hall of the Menus-Plaisirs. This theatre led the vanguard in the matter of scenic realism; it is



EAST SIDE OF THE OPERA



## CH. V.] OF THE THEATRE

also the cheapest theatre in Paris. The rapid prosperity which it owed to Antoine has continued, and even increased, under the management of the actor Gémier. "Antoine won his spurs in this theatre," said Gémier; "I wish to win mine; remembering the while that an art-theatre, according to Zola's vigorous expression, must thrive upon the literary passions. I herewith warn mercenary authors, and actors devoid of faith and courage, that the doors of the Théâtre Antoine will be inexorably closed against them. It is they who have brought about what is known as the theatrical crisis. Such authors begin by drawing up a treaty, by which they secure for the play which *they intend to write* a date of performance picked out at the most favourable moment of the theatrical season, a minimum of representations, and a cast including several famous actors. When this treaty has been signed and sealed, the dramatic author will consent to write his play and deliver it at a fixed date."

Gémier thus laid bare one of the crying evils of the "abominable" stage, as Henri Becque has called it. Gémier also protested against the superficial tendencies of the modern theatre, the poor companies, the abuse of stars, the vanity and exactions of actors. He recalled the *mot* of the actor Taillade: "On my honour, they no longer know how to starve to death!"

Gémier therefore set to work. He addressed himself to artists and poets, and he will be able to fulfil his promises, because he has made a pecuniary success, thanks to some taking plays, such as *Sherlock Holmes*, which draw to the Antoine even the big audiences of the

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. V.]

Ambigu. Art-triumphs can only be approached by way of pecuniary success.

One of the theatres in the neighbourhood of the Théâtre Antoine is the *Renaissance*, which has been under the management of the actor Guitry since 1902. With such an artist at its head, the enterprise could not but succeed. Guitry is a man without equal, incontestably the best actor in Paris; he plays only modern comedies by the most celebrated authors, and he has never known anything but success. M. Henry Bataille, the author of several clever plays, writes: "Guitry is the most representative of our artists—an intellectual actor in the best sense of the word. Be sure that niggardly Nature will not often produce his like, and that at this present hour, by his marvellous gifts, the delicate shades of his action, the subtlety of his technique, his firm but tactful authority, and his irresistible magnetism, Guitry is one of the foremost living comedians.

*Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt.*—This illustrious artist triumphs there every evening when she is in Paris; she is still admired with a sort of devout amazement which she renews at will. She is our enduring idol, worthy of the choicest adjectives our language can afford. She has the courage to play the works of the poets, and to bring to them both fame and money.

*Théâtre Réjane.*—We owe this playhouse to the divorce between Mme. Réjane and M. Porel, in consequence of which the latter retained the Vaudeville. Mme. Réjane is wit and spirit personified; she is instinct with nervous, supple life and keen intelligence, and

rarely makes a mistake. Anatole France says of her : "She is a creature of such diversified and varied gifts that she can interpret works of the most opposite style, and can play any part she pleases. There are twenty Réjanes in Réjane, all differing from each other, and yet all resembling her alone. By turns subtle, comic, touching and pathetic, and always true, she unites exquisite taste with perfect naturalness ; she knows how to dare and yet to keep within bounds ; she can give to fancy and caprice a classic purity ; she is Parisian and she is human ; she is a lady and a woman ; she has the very genius of the stage, and is all action, from the wayward locks of her hair to the tips of her toes—in short, she is original and creative to the highest degree : she creates Réjanes."

She has not been afraid to give *matinées* for young girls ; thanks to her, our girls can pass innocent hours at the theatre. They can cultivate themselves and form their taste and judgment, so that they no longer fear to make audible comments upon the mysteries of Ibsen.

*Vaudeville*.—M. Porel, the manager, struggles valiantly against the memories of Mme. Réjane and the Réjane theatre ; he has in his favour the inestimable advantage that his house has the better position, in the very centre of the boulevards.

It is not at the Vaudeville that they play vaudevilles, but at the Nouveautés, where the comic actor Germain grimaces very successfully ; at the Palais Royal, which is somewhat out of fashion ; at the Folies Dramatiques ; and at Cluny. Melodramas flourish at the Ambigu, which was formerly made famous by Frederick Lemaître ;

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. V

spectacular and fairy plays at the Châtelet, which can seat over three thousand persons. In 1874 Colonne undertook to give symphony concerts there on Sundays during the winter. The Porte St Martin is Coquelin's theatre—in other words, the theatre of Cyrano de Bergerac and of the future "Chantecler." Every play at this theatre which is not signed by Edmond Rostand produces the effect of an interlude, more or less successful.

There are no great differences in regard to literary merit in the programmes of the Renaissance, the Vaudeville, the Gymnase, and even the Variétés. They rival each other on the same lines, and are quite ready to rob each other of authors, plays, or performers. Towards the close of the year, however, the Variétés distinguishes itself from the other boulevard theatres by the traditional "review," the *Revue des Variétés*. The Parisian public delight in these performances, in which they see defiling before their eyes all the celebrities of the day and all the events, great or small, sad or gay, which have taken place during the year. The style of the performance is time-honoured, fixed, and invariable; it does not admit of the slightest variation. In a good review there must be a pair of male and female gossips who make puns; there must be an array of notabilities in literature and politics, and a battalion of pretty women; there must be a scene of theatrical imitations, which is the pivot on which the whole performance turns, and the only feature of it which ventures to vary a little; there must be satirical, patriotic, and slightly



THE MOULIN ROUGE.





## CH. V.] OF THE THEATRE

*risqué* couplets; then there must be a white horse with Napoleon on its back, and, finally, the apotheosis. The public rushes to these costly reviews because they are said not to tax the brains of average people, and to rest the brains of clever people who are capable of enjoying nonsense.

Finally, to sum up the subject, we number in Paris over a score of large theatres, as many small or local ones, eight or ten series of symphony concerts, a hundred *café-concerts*, artistic taverns and music-halls, seven or eight great cinematographs, a host of smaller ones, and half a dozen circuses, which have fallen into disfavour of late.

Among the minor theatres we must at least mention the Grand Guignol, where terror reigns, where ladies faint, and whither the public are in the habit of resorting in search of a half-comic, half-terrifying, and wholly original style of play. The most successful of its attempts hitherto has been *The System of Dr Goudran and Professor Plume*, after Edgar Allan Poe.

It may easily be seen that the Grand Guignol has nothing in common with the real Guignol—the Punch-and-Judy show given in the open air. Punch, or Guignol, is the principal personage in the French puppet-show, and is to be seen to the best advantage on the Champs Elysées. His audience is composed of children, all seated, and a dense half-circle of grown people standing behind them, and only separated by a rope. The grown people are standing, not, as might be supposed, in order to leave more room for the children, but

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. V.]

merely because outside the rope the show is free. Punch does, indeed, take up a collection, but it is the usual custom of economical citizens not to contribute to it.

We must not forget the so-called "side-theatres," which do not give regular performances, and have no settled abiding-place. They consist simply of groups of young playwrights, who have joined forces, and who, not being able to get their plays performed, have decided to be their own managers. Accordingly they subscribe to a common fund, draw up by-laws, arrange a programme, recruit a company of young actors, and hire a hall, always with the hope that out of their joint efforts will arise a new dramatic movement.

The best-known of these intermittent theatres is L'Œuvre, founded in 1893 by M. Lugné Poë. His aim was to make the public familiar with the works of the great foreign dramatists and of the idealist young French writers. M. Lugné Poë was actor and manager at the same time; he played Ibsen, Björnson, Hauptmann, and Maeterlinck. He carried L'Œuvre into Holland, Belgium, Denmark and Sweden, Norway, and Germany. He is still continuing his highly remunerative tours over Europe, accompanied by his wife, Mme. Susanne Desprès, one of the most original actresses of the day. L'Œuvre has not entirely lost touch with Paris, but its performances have lost much of their former picturesqueness.

Yes, a hundred *café-concerts*, taverns, and music-halls!—Paris has all these, without counting its wine-cellars, where people come in family parties, where



CAFÉ CHANTANT IN THE CHAMPELYSÉES



## CH. V.] OF THE THEATRE

there is smoking and drinking in moderation, and where for twenty sous one has a comfortable seat and can listen to music, singing, and monologues while sipping a cup of coffee, a bock, or a glass of cherry-brandy. Occasionally a child who has fallen asleep on its mother's lap wakes up and cries, for there are five or six hundred spectators, and the air is unbreathable. The leader of the orchestra plays the piano with his left hand, while he beats time with his right. Suddenly, in the midst of the final review, there appears on the stage a bear led by a gentleman in a dress-suit, who challenges amateurs to single combat. Accomplices, seated among the audience, spring upon the stage, and engage in a wrestling-match with the bear, which is equally perfunctory on the part of both, and this ends the performance. Nothing more stupid could be imagined, but the audience has passed a delightful evening.

In summer all entertainments are held in the open air, even to the *café-concert*. It is no longer the *café-concert* of old, where the lady performers were seated in a half-circle on a shallow stage, and each advanced to the foot-lights in turn to warble her little ditty; nowadays these ladies are out of sight, and there is a regular stage, with scenery and dressing-rooms for the performers. The seats are dearer than formerly, but on either side of the fauteuils there are still rows of chairs at four sous, which are greatly in demand by well-to-do citizens. All this class of entertainments have become a serious menace to the stage by depriving the public of whatever slight fastidiousness of taste it once possessed.

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. V.]

Unfortunate theatres! Even the very fairs set up an opposition to them. M. Jules Lemaitre says in his *Impressions de Théâtre*: "The Fair of Neuilly is my chosen realm, for a fair is a succession of delightful shows. Farce flourished in days of yore at the fair of St Laurent, and there the Opéra-Comique poured forth its earliest trills." And the Academician unblushingly proceeds to devote delicious pages to a description of shooting-matches, hobby-horses, whirligigs, somnambulists, and prodigies; to the electrical woman, the beautiful Fatma, and the menagerie, with Bidel, the lion-tamer, and Mdlle. Emma, the trainer of fleas. After the Fair of Neuilly there is nothing left but the spectacle of Nature.

All the playhouses of Paris, with three or four exceptions, are uncomfortable.

Those who have visited London go into ecstasies over the comfort of the London theatres, and this apparently without flattery. Most of our theatres are old-fashioned, and it is only when one is burnt down that it occurs to anybody to modernize it. Even then it is never rebuilt on a new plan, but is simply the old theatre over again, with the same narrow passages and dangerous stairs, the same small stage, the same ugliness, and the same smells; and the audiences must continue either to stifle or to freeze. On the night of a first performance there is always a desperate struggle to recover one's overcoat from the box-opener, besieged in her narrow den; it would, in fact, be far simpler to run out and buy a new one. One institution which the English have no cause to envy us is that of our box-openers, or *placeuses*, who are perpetually

## CH. V.] OF THE THEATRE

clamouring for little fees in return for bringing us cushions and footstools which we do not want. In the subsidized theatres these functionaries preserve a certain semblance of decency, a sort of solemn administrative air, but everywhere else they are sulky and rapacious harpies, living at the spectator's expense. He growls occasionally below his breath, but to do so openly would be neither gentlemanly nor generous. None of us ever listen to the close of a play, because we are all thinking of our overcoats; the more impatient spirits go for theirs in the last entr'acte, so that the performers reveal the dénouement to an audience who are all turning their backs to the stage, and thrusting their arms into their sleeves. When the final exit takes place, we move *en masse*, an inch at a time, all exclaiming: "In case of a fire we should be roasted like flies!" What the public really ought to do is to protest, rebel, and stay at home; but it has a short memory for catastrophes. One critic (it must have been Francisque Sarcey) asserted that Parisians like to be uncomfortable at the theatre. If this be so, they are served to their taste. Only one theatre—the newly-built Théâtre Réjane—is spacious and safe, and for this the public hardly seem to thank Mme. Réjane.

We must not omit to mention the vigorous campaign which has been carried on against the hats worn by women at the theatre, a campaign which seems about to be crowned with success. The situation was growing intolerable. To the first attack the ladies merely replied by silent scorn, while their hats went on increasing in



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. V.]

size and ugliness. The harmless masculine spectator saw suddenly towering between himself and the stage an odious erection of ill-omened plumes and flowers, a sinister array of velvet, fur and ribbons. No manager dared to take the initiative step and institute radical measures, which might diminish his receipts. Accordingly the sorely-tried men rebelled; cries, hisses, and even occasional fisticuffs prevented the actors from going on with their parts, and the curtain had to be lowered. The ladies finally took alarm at these demonstrations, for though they undoubtedly came to the theatre to show their hats, they came a little also for the play; and on the whole they preferred attending the theatre bareheaded to not coming at all. It was a mere question of adopting a new fashion, which they are beginning to do. The managers, greatly reassured of late, have ventured to take sides against those women who have not grasped the situation, and have compelled them to remove their hats or to change their places; and an inoffending man can, therefore, seat himself once more in an orchestra or balcony-stall with a slight chance of seeing something of the stage.

A play by a new writer, having been accepted, what chance is there of its being performed? What becomes of all the new plays announced at the opening of the season, which one never hears of again? The manager selects out of his drawers full of manuscript two or three pieces which he can count upon to draw good houses. If he makes a hit with these, the others can wait their turn; and if this turn never comes, the authors are entitled to

an indemnity, the amount of which is fixed by the society of dramatic writers and composers. The Théâtre Français is the only theatre which has no agreement with this society.

Granting, however, that the play has been accepted, and the parts copied, assigned, and distributed, the rehearsals then begin, and with them begins a wearying life for the poor author—a life of doubts, of false hopes, of concealed hostility. Some young and timid writers let everything go ; having at last got their play staged, the rest does not concern them : they scarcely glance at the design for the stage-setting, and care to listen only to the perfected text. Other authors attend to everything in person—scenery, costumes, accessories, down to the delivery of every line. They work from the stage-boxes, adding or suppressing scenes—making the play over again, as it were. Some authors disregard the manager altogether; others admit him to a close collaboration, which is the more agreeable to them for being anonymous on his part.

It often happens that a play is not really the work of the author whose signature it bears, since a manager does not always confine himself to giving technical suggestions. It would be a difficult and delicate question to define the contribution of a man like Guitry to the pieces he plays, even when they are signed by famous names. The author accepts from him ideas, sketches of scenes, happy hits in the way of dialogue and infallible stage-effects, and can rely absolutely on his discretion in the matter. Most of the theatres which have the greatest vogue are directed by actors, such as Antoine, Gémier, Guitry,

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. V.]

Sarah Bernhardt, Réjane, Porel, Deval, the Coquelins. Nearly all the actors write plays, or are perfectly capable of writing them. Nothing could be more natural, therefore, than those acknowledged and fortunate collaborations of which we have spoken. More than one triumphant success can be explained by the touch of the managerial hand. It is said of such a play that it would have been a dead failure on any other stage; the actor-manager has barely saved it by his talent as a comedian. But what of that? Every success depends greatly on the conditions of time, place, and circumstances in which it is given, and also upon outside aid. And success is surely rare enough for all the credit of it to be attributed to the author. Is it not he who is the greatest sufferer from a failure?

When it becomes a question of acknowledged collaboration between two authors, we hardly know how to distribute our praise or our criticism. To which one belongs the principal scene, this witty dialogue or that touching speech? Friends always think themselves able to discriminate, and by a singular chance they are invariably mistaken. Hence wry faces and a probable rupture between the partners are the consequences of a joint success. In some cases, however, collaboration is so close, so continuous, of such long-standing, that neither can any longer distinguish his own share. They have become a sort of Siamese twins: what one writes, the other has thought; they suffer and rejoice in unison, and ignore all jealousy. But such combinations are exceedingly rare.

CH. V.]      OF THE THEATRE

We used to see at final rehearsals two gentlemen of commonplace appearance seated in the orchestra chairs. They said nothing to each other, and preserved an impassive demeanour. The puzzled author scanned them out of the corner of his eye to discover what was their impression of his play. Apparently they had none, or, at least, they failed to betray it by the faintest smile or the most trifling exclamation. They did not even yawn. These were the censors; they were listening to the play merely in order to assure themselves that it corresponded line for line with the text of the manuscript submitted to the censorship and sanctioned by it. Latterly these gentlemen have been suppressed, and the censorship with them. "Anastasie"\* censured badly; she scanned the letter without concerning herself with the spirit, and made no distinction between the audacities of an artistic work and mere vulgar indecencies. The Republic assumes that the spectator is mature enough to be his own censor, and to hiss the phrase or gesture which shocks his moral sense. But the public is too easy-going, too much afraid of not keeping up with the times; it therefore accepts pretty much everything offered it, and the authors profit by the licence thus granted them. *Risqué* words are therefore the fashion; nothing ends a rattling tirade with more effect. All the vulgar slang of the day is accepted, provided it is telling enough. This is what Barbey d'Aurevilly called "mendicant art." The public does not protest, therefore it likes that kind of thing; it applauds as if to silence its scruples, and is revolted by

\* Name by which the censor is known in the slang of the stage.

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. v.

nothing on the stage except audacity of thought. Accordingly the purists, in alarm at the prevailing coarseness of language, cry out to have the censorship restored. They will doubtless bring this about sooner or later, just as they did during the Restoration and under the Empire. Periodical suppression and restoration of the censorship is a see-saw method which seems to be necessary in France, in order to maintain what the *paterfamilias* calls good morals.

A general rehearsal at the theatre is commonly preceded by what is called a dressmaker's rehearsal, when the play is given with scenery, costumes, and accessories before an audience composed of dressmakers and milliners, as well as friends of the theatre and of the author. This trial of the play before a circle of intimates gives rather valuable hints; it offers the additional advantage of wearing out some of the malevolence of the author's friends. After this rehearsal is over, they calm down, or resign themselves, as the case may be; and the force of their rivalry being expended, on the following night, dispersed among the crowd, they offer less resistance to his success, or meet his failure with a blunted enjoyment.

This dressmaker's rehearsal will soon become the general rehearsal, for the latter has long since been turned into an actual first night, and the latter name has quite lost its meaning. What, in fact, is a general rehearsal in these days? The bill-boards announce "No Performance," and yet the house is never fuller or more brilliantly lighted than on this occasion. Ladies and gentlemen, all wearing a slightly blasé air, are flocking



PLACE DU THÉÂTRE FRANÇAIS



## CH. V.] OF THE THEATRE

to the doors in private carriages; all the celebrities of Paris are there—women of the world and of the half-world, and those strangers who never miss any theatrical event; in short, a mixed audience—a nervous, familiar, and slightly ferocious audience—fills the house, and the evening is likely to end in a tempest.

It is on this public that the fate of the play depends; it is for them that actors are seized with stage-fright, that the author chews up his handkerchief in his anguish, that the manager turns as pale as the captain of a sinking ship, and even the stage-carpenter, in spite of his proverbial reputation for philosophy, cannot maintain an air of complete indifference. A general-rehearsal audience may kill a play or raise it to the skies; it commands a twofold press—the printed and the spoken press, the latter being much the more powerful. The *presse parlée* gets in its work during the entr'actes in the lobbies, and, later, outside the theatre, at casual meetings, at visits, and dinners. It does far more harm and more good than the printed press, for the latter sins chiefly through indulgence. It is the *presse parlée*, with its greater sincerity, which draws the public or keeps it away; for the public distrusts professional criticism, having too often been taken in by it, and has a tendency to regard its praises as paid advertisements. Divergencies of opinion disturb the public. A good play ought to be a good play for everybody. It must be admitted that with a few distinguished exceptions—and even these are not infallible—the modern critic produces the effect of a bored and frivolous being, both incompetent and insincere. Criticism,



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. V.]

if it be unanimous, can crush a play, but it cannot force the public to tolerate one—not, at least, for any length of time. A few exhortations of “Don’t fail to see it,” uttered in Paris salons, are worth far more than scores of critiques. Not that the public taste is improving—not at all!—or, at least, this progress is barely perceptible; but the stubborn public, which pays out of its own pocket, insists on liking what it pleases, and going where it chooses. It regards itself as the final judge, and makes the most of this prerogative.

The author is often the person who learns the least from a general rehearsal; he does not actually confound a failure with a triumph, but a half-success, a *succès d’estime*, often deceives him. Being behind the curtain, he hears applause, but does not always distinguish that which is most important—the exact tone of this applause. At the end of each act his friends rush upon the stage, crying: “It is going superbly! It is taking wonderfully! Aren’t you delighted? You ought to be.” But what does all this signify? In order to be perfectly sure of its sincerity, the author would have to be a wonderful judge of physiognomy, when he is in fact reduced by his nervousness to a mere mental wreck.

When his success becomes unmistakable, the visits of his friends, after the first act, take on the proportions of a ceremony. One might fancy oneself at a fashionable wedding! It is usually in the manager’s room that the author receives this crowd, who flock round him, congratulate him, squeeze his hand, tread on his toes, and embrace him fervently. The purchasers of plays profit

## CH. v.] OF THE THEATRE

by his lingering anxiety to strike a good bargain, for on the following day, if his success is confirmed by the newspapers, the price of the play will have doubled. His friends decide to assume an air of frank delight ; his family, who have hitherto been somewhat unbelieving, are moved to tears; all are ready to share his triumph.

It will be seen that the general rehearsal is actually a first night, of which the regular performance is only a repetition. It is after this rehearsal that the critics write their articles. Sometimes, when the ordeal has been a painful one, the authors contest their right to do this. " Our play is still our own," they say ; " we have admitted the critics as a favour, in order to facilitate their task, but it is only after the first public performance that they have the right to judge our piece. We may still modify the work, change a scene, alter the dénouement, or even withdraw the play altogether. Such a thing has happened as a general rehearsal without a morrow, and it may happen again. Is it not the critics' place, therefore, to keep our secret until it is proclaimed to the public on the first night ?

But, in spite of these protests, this rehearsal becomes more and more a genuine first night. Sometimes an author loses his temper, and threatens to prosecute a newspaper for publishing a premature criticism, but such a suit has not yet been brought into court.

There exists in the theatre a paid public, and a particularly insupportable one, known as the *claque*. Suddenly, after a choice bit of dialogue, there comes such a noisy burst of applause from the front row of the first balcony

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. V.]

that one turns to look, and perceives a score of gentlemen seated in a row, all precisely alike in dress and appearance, and all clapping together at the word of command of a big man, who is evidently their leader. These professional *claqueurs* have the defect of not knowing how to applaud; there are no finer shades in their appreciation; their applause is too brusque, too violent, too prolonged or too brief, and as devoid of rhythm as a washerwoman's bat; it is, moreover, impertinent and needless. Audiences do not require to have the good things pointed out to them; they are quite equal to doing their own applause, and making "*le petit brouhaha*," alluded to by Molière. But, having been ordered to clap, they merely stick their hands in their pockets and listen with a scowl. Success owes nothing to the *claque*, and is more often compromised by it. Guitry, at the time when he was stage-manager at the Français, made an appeal to the high standards of the house to suppress this *claque* altogether, but it has been restored under a more discreet form. The leader now conceals himself, and his subordinates are skilfully dispersed among the crowd, for it appears that real artists cannot get on without this sound to greet their entrances and exits, and cheer them in their great scenes; they look for it, and must have it.

The most trifling reform would seem to be impossible on the stage. There was an attempt made some time since to suppress the prompter, but it only resulted in moving him from the foot-lights behind the scenes; and where we formerly had one prompter we now have two or three, one of whom will always be close at hand to aid

an actor's memory whenever he may be on the stage. Lapses of memory are the one thing an audience will not endure, and yet it is often in these moments of embarrassment that an actor is most natural.

During Holy Week the theatres—even the most successful of them—adopt an entire change of bill. The week is devoted to sacred plays, in which the figures of Christ, of St John, of the Magdalene and the Samaritan woman, appear on every stage, and nothing is heard but words of clemency, repentance, and charity. The public amuses itself with discretion; the very actors intone their speeches and infuse a certain solemnity into their gestures while uttering serious words, which sometimes move their audience to reflection, and induce them to give a little more than usual to the box-opener. Renan deplored these spectacles and groaned over such profanation, but perhaps he was in the wrong. These Holy-Week plays may not be totally inefficacious; the pleasures of the theatre are thus reconciled with the performance of certain conscientious duties.

Holy Week over, the same audiences again meet at the Horse Show, where they pay not the slightest attention to the riders who pass and repass before them on the track, except when one of them is thrown from his horse and thereby arouses a temporary commotion.

It is only after the theatres have been closed for a month that the *conservatoire*, that admirable training-school for artists, gives its annual representation. Those who are favoured with invitations hasten back from the country for the occasion, and cards are in great demand,

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. V.]

in spite of the lateness of the season, the heat, the crowded hall, and the entire absence of novelty in the exercises. The most picturesque feature of the performance is the comedy competition, in which young men in black coats and young girls in virginal white take part, attended by their agitated parents, and encouraged by their professors. During the competition the privileged audience applauds with extreme partiality, and at its conclusion the verdicts of the jury are usually received with dissatisfaction. There are cries of vehement protest and even fainting fits; and thus two or three more stars are added to the firmament, to pale to-morrow before the foot-lights.

Does the modern movement in favour of popular dramatic art permit us to hope that Paris will some day possess a theatre for the people? Such an institution already exists in the provinces. It was at Bussang in the Vosges that M. Maurice Pottecher founded the first people's theatre. Various attempts have been made to follow his example; but, except at Bussang, the tendency has been rather towards open-air performances than a popular stage. In Paris many grandiose projects have been drawn up on paper and discussed by leading authors and political men, but the only practical attempt to carry them out has been that of the comedian, Henri Beaulieu, who has presented, before a popular audience drawn from the faubourgs, literary plays with a socialistic tendency. The enterprise was ephemeral, owing to the lack of material support. M. Berny has founded two popular theatres which appear to flourish, thanks to a



CORNER OF RUE DES BLANCS MANTEAUX AND RUE DES ARCHIVES



## CH. V.] OF THE THEATRE

repertory which is, perhaps, a trifle eclectic. The enterprise known by the name of "Trente ans du Théâtre," founded in 1901 by M. A. Bernheim, is a sort of itinerant popular theatre. Its aim is to organize performances for the benefit of veteran actors who, after a career of thirty years upon the stage, find themselves in reduced circumstances. Actors from all the principal theatres give their services, and the works performed, both dramatic and musical, are borrowed from the classic repertory. This is a most meritorious work; but without the voluntary aid of famous actors and noted lecturers, what would become of an enterprise so admirable in its results, but so costly to carry on?

In spite of the efforts of MM. Maurice Pottecher, Gustave Geffroy, Lucien Descaves, and Camille de Sainte Croix, the ideal of a National People's Theatre which would appeal to all classes, and which, in accordance with Michelet's desire, should bear the same relation to our people of to-day as did the Athenian theatre to the contemporaries of Pericles; which should draw together spectators of varied race and spirit in "that community of thought and sentiment, that identity of soul which constituted the genius of Athens"—this ideal still remains a dream of the poets.

It really seems as if, at the present time, the only popular theatre in Paris were, alas! the cinematograph. It is about to be perfected. Hitherto its performances have been merely grotesque and coarse pantomimes; the hour has come, it appears, for dramatic authors to elevate the style of the performance, to profit by its



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. v.]

vogue, and "make it serve for the diffusion of art." A society—several societies, in fact, have come into being which propose to represent by the cinematograph real comedies, actual dramas written by our best authors and staged by our leading artists, works appropriately abridged, and producing, thanks to the latest discoveries of science, novel effects surpassing anything we can as yet anticipate. Writers will be remunerated at the rate of five francs per roll of films, or ten centimes per metre. The Society of Authors will collect all dues.

What will then become of the stage? How will it resist this assault of commercialism? Will not the authors of France be contributing in this fashion to the discredit of their art? What will remain of the comedian, who each evening creates his own life afresh, if he suffers it to be fixed once for all in a stereotyped performance without lights and shades? Would an unpublished play by Sardou, interpreted by Sarah Bernhardt, be a drama under such conditions?

It would doubtless bring in much money, and is not that the whole question? The evil seems to be inevitable; the crowd will all rush to the cinematograph of the future. But possibly the theatre thus abandoned will become once more, as of old, the entertainment of cultivated people. It will merely lose a vulgar public, managers without taste, and plays written for commercial ends; it will keep its ideal of dramatic art. In this way the cinematograph may possibly bring about the elevation of the theatre.



BOULEVARD DE LA MADELEINE: EARLY EVENING



## CHAPTER VI

### Of Women in Paris

The Society Woman—Dressmakers—Visits—The Opera—The Races—  
Women at the Sorbonne—Literary Women—Feminists—Queens of  
the Theatre—Servants—A Foreigner's Opinion

A PROVERB of ancient date calls Paris the heaven of women and the hell of horses. In so far as regards horses, the proverb is in a fair way to fall into disuse, for if automobilism continues to progress at its present rate, horses will have ceased to suffer, owing to the fact of their entire disappearance. As to women, their lot remains the same as in the past; it may even be claimed that it is growing more brilliant for the rich and easier for the poor. Paris is still the city of woman, especially of the pretty or graceful or merely elegant woman. It is in Paris still that feminine luxury is carried to the highest point of good taste, if not of display, and it is there that *chic* women the world over, including sovereigns and millionairesses, order their choicest finery. Even Miss Gladys Vanderbilt was faithful to this observance in confiding to the Callot sisters the creation of those toilettes in which she was to appear as Comtesse Szechenyi. It is a somewhat surprising fact, however, which might lead one to suppose that elegance which formerly belonged to Paris is growing cosmopolitan, that our great dressmakers and milliners, both men and women, now include a large proportion of foreigners and Jews, or at least of bearers of foreign names, such as Redfern, Worth, Bechoff-David, Esther Meyer,

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi.]

Lewis, Rouff, etc. But this merely means that there is room in Paris for people of enterprise, whatever their nationality. Good taste, however, remains an emanation from the environment, a sort of feminine atmosphere enveloping workwomen and customers alike, and inspiring those who have the vocation. Take these same dressmakers, transport them to Berlin or New York, and cut off all connection with Paris, and their creations will soon begin to show less refinement, and to lose their subtle shades and dainty touches.

The life of a Parisian *élégante* is far from being an idle one; it is, on the contrary, a prodigiously active and frightfully exhausting life, which no one can lead with success who is not endowed with executive ability and great nervous endurance.

The cares of the toilette, the daily succession of visits, receptions and fêtes, the theatres, the flower and picture shows, races, lectures, attendance at church, with many other duties and pleasures, form a cycle absorbing every hour and moment of this rushing, fluttering, *froufrou-tante* existence.

In short, a Parisian woman of fashion lives in a perpetual whirl, which allows her no graceful intervals of leisure in which to retire within herself and indulge in dreams and reverie. Dress alone constitutes an intolerable tyranny—one, however, to which she slavishly submits. The morning toilette, to begin with, involves the torment of the hairdresser and the manicure, and for many the torment of “making up” the complexion, of massage of the head at intervals (a long and fatiguing

## CH. vi.] OF WOMEN IN PARIS

process), and of face-massage for her who trembles at the sight of her first wrinkle. Then the morning costume is not that of the afternoon, nor the afternoon one that of the evening. She is clever indeed or wonderfully well waited on who escapes with three hours of torture and boredom out of the twenty-four. To this must be added—once a week at least, and for many two or three times as often—that labour of Sisyphus known as “trying on.” What hours are wasted at the great dress-makers in waiting for one’s turn, in alterations and final touches! In the hands of the tryer-on the richest of women become mere slaves; the proudest must submit meekly to disappointment and annoyance. And this even for those favoured beings whose figure is faultless. But, alas! how many charming persons can show a pretty face and walk with a graceful gait who yet have a host of little defects of shape, in which case the *mannequin* is a delusion and a snare. For the *mannequin*\* always has a perfect figure, and carries off a toilette to admiration; it is for that purpose that she has been selected and is paid by her employer at the lavish rate of eighty francs a month, which does not prevent her from keeping her automobile and “going the pace.” The *mannequin* accordingly makes the beautiful new tissues float and glisten, rustle and catch the light, and decides the customer to order a toilette. But if the latter be dumpy while the *mannequin* is slender, or hollow-chested when she is plump, or round-shouldered while

\* The name given to girls who appear in the latest creations of the shop to show them off before customers.

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi.]

she is straight, alas for the luckless customer! It is no holiday performance to be perfectly well dressed.

Then, besides the dressmaker, there are the milliner, the bootmaker, the dealer in furs, who cost her many a tiresome hour. Do you fancy it a trifling matter to adapt a hat the size of a Gruyère cheese, and as bedecked with plumes as a funeral-car, to every style of beauty? or that the trying on of shoes of the tiniest dimensions, much smaller than the foot to which they are to be fitted, is an easy business? And are you aware that nothing is so capricious, so variable in shade and difficult to select, as furs? These are no laughing matters.

And if it were at least possible to trust to luck in the choice of one's dressmaker and milliner, affairs would be greatly simplified. But not at all! It is an art to choose with discernment and change with discretion. Doubtless all these artists in dress have taste, but each has his own taste and his own traditions.

Take Worth, for example, heir of that Worth whose creations ruled the world of fashion during the Second Empire. He is one of the aristocrats of the art of dress. He remembers those fabulous days when the flower of the Court and the town besieged the great Worth—intrigued, fought, implored for a costume designed by the famous dressmaker. Accordingly, the present Worth affects a well-bred elegance, a traditional style which is not suited to every smart and sparkling *mondaine* enamoured of novelty.

M. Jacques Doucet belongs also to the *noblesse de robe*. This charming gentleman takes the same care of his own

## CH. vi.] OF WOMEN IN PARIS

person as of that of his prettiest lady-customer. With his fine snowy beard, his impeccable vest and top-coat, his air and bearing, he might easily pass for a member of the Jockey Club. M. Doucet, indeed, does not wish to be regarded as a dressmaker, but merely as an amateur who does a little dressmaking to please the ladies, especially theatrical ladies. In reality, he is an artist and a man of the world, who can show you his exquisite collection of pastels by Latour and Chardin, as well as his own paintings, and whose stables are filled with thoroughbreds and wonderful turn-outs.

Next comes M. Dœuillet, the most youthful of the dressmakers—a man of cavalier bearing, who took Paris by storm. This young warrior, prematurely bald, loves show and novelty, and knows how to display in his own person the elegance he prescribes for others.

Isidore, surnamed Paquin, who has just died, his enemies say, of elation on receiving the Cross of the Legion of Honour, was also a conqueror. Starting as a mere bank-clerk, he rapidly scaled the steep heights leading to the realm of Fashion. He was a daring inventor, who gave his customers no time to draw breath. No one could multiply new models as rapidly as he, nor was he daunted by oddity, extravagance, or even a hint of bad taste; yet, on the whole, he had the true vocation. Let us pause a moment before this strange, surly figure, with a retreating forehead and prominent nose and chin. It is Redfern, a good fellow, on the whole, and royally *chic*, who dresses people of the highest rank, and is, at the same time, an adept in sports. In spite of his long



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi.

residence in France and his keen appreciation of French elegance, he has never been able to master our language.

Little diversities of humour, of tradition, of taste exist in all spheres, and are to be found in dressmakers and milliners as well as among the rest of mankind. Thus, side by side with a man-milliner named Lévis, who constructs his models with his own hands, we find a Lenthéric, who combines hair-dressing and millinery, claiming that these arts are inseparable, and that the man who cannot dress a woman's hair is incapable of making her a hat; and in close proximity with a Caroline Reboux, who began by winning diplomas, and graduated, as it were, from the higher education into hats (both works for the head, by the way), we encounter a dame X, who has carried into her new profession the highly-coloured vocabulary of the ladies of the *halles*. It is from out this varied and picturesque world that the Parisian woman of fashion must make her selection, and if she chances to be lacking in taste and judgment, she runs great hazards.

The exigencies of the toilette being met, our society-woman must satisfy the demands of the world of pleasure, so called. For a Parisian of pure race, to receive is a science and art. She will rarely consent to follow the example of her Anglo-Saxon sisters, who leave all these cares to their servants, and who may have the best of reasons for so doing. It is true that the Parisian hostess attends only incidentally to her table, though she does not disdain to overlook the menu and decorations. The Parisienne is a born decorator, especially a floral deco-



RUE DE RIVOLI



## CH. vi.] OF WOMEN IN PARIS

rator; she will see, therefore, that harmony reigns among her flowers, and that all discordant colours are banished. This is no slight fatigue added to that of issuing the invitations and that of the reception itself, which are shared by hostesses in all countries.

Next come visits and dining with one's neighbour. The visits are innumerable and never-ending. It is not the distances that count in these days of the space-devouring machine; it is the visit itself—that little visit lasting but a quarter of an hour, which, nevertheless, goes on for ever: the ceaseless flood of chatter and small-talk, of meaningless questions and equally meaningless answers; those nothings which one must keep on reiterating throughout the mortal hours of an afternoon, constantly on one's guard the while against those fatal slips of the tongue; those "things one would rather not have said," which sometimes excite rancour as well as ridicule. Yet who knows?—these visits, which seem so futile, are, perhaps, the tie which binds society together. It may be owing to the little visit that the social world keeps up its traditions, and is conscious of its own evolution. Do away with it, and the various sets which constitute all Paris might dissolve and vanish away—a result over which the cynical philosopher would perhaps rejoice.

Dinners, while necessarily less numerous, since it is impossible to dine more than once in an evening, are also a source of weariness. In the first place, they are unhealthy functions, in spite of the fact that our ladies no longer taste the toothsome side-dish, and avoid winelike

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi.]

poison. They are unhealthy because there are too many people breathing the same atmosphere for too many hours, in attitudes that are not restful even in softly-cushioned chairs, and because one must again be perpetually on the look-out for those unlucky slips of the tongue which are equally regrettable whether uttered by ourselves or by someone else at our expense.

And fortunate they who escape with a dinner, and for whom this function is not followed by receptions extending far into the night, where one is squeezed into narrow chairs to listen to monologues and amateur theatricals badly played by would-be actors, or to endure the shrieks of a soprano or the roars of a baritone. Thus the night wears away until one sinks into one's bed, satiated and prostrated by the pleasures of society.

Then come the public diversions which Paris offers to her daughters. There is the theatre ; there are concerts ; there are lectures ; there are——but the truth is, the Parisienne cares for nothing but the theatre. That may be a fatigue, too, but it is, at least, a pleasurable one. She resorts to the boulevard theatres, and to the smaller and remoter playhouses, simply to hear and see her favourite artists ; but on the occasion of a first night at the Opéra, the Opéra Comique, or the Comédie Française, her motives are more complicated : she must then show herself in all her bravery of apparel ; she must strive to eclipse Mme. X, and be as little eclipsed as possible by Mme. Y. These are important ceremonies, and very agreeable to watch for those rare individuals who are present merely as observers.

## CH. vi.] OF WOMEN IN PARIS

When the Grand Opera reopened the other evening with *Faust*, the house presented a dazzling spectacle: on one side was the social display of all Paris—a shimmer of beautiful stuffs, a glitter of gems and pearls, a host of charming women, adorably clad and spirited as thoroughbreds; on the other hand was the spectacle offered by the new managers, MM. André Messager, Lagarde, and Broussan. This, too, was an imposing display: the immense auditorium had been repainted and regilded *con amore*; the boxes and stalls had been made lighter and a superb new curtain inaugurated; but, above all, the managers had mounted a new *Faust* in place of the venerable and traditional one. They had endeavoured by means of scenery, costumes, and stage effects to bring this ancient fable a little closer to reality. The legendary Marguerite was attired like a German Burgermaid in a bluish gown embroidered in coral, a pink and white apron, a gilt bodice, and a lace cap over an embroidered coif, beneath which hung her two long blonde and virginal braids; the worthy Faust was close-shaven, and clad in a costume as German as that of his *Gretchen*. He wore high boots of soft leather, a fur-trimmed brown tunic, and a wide black slouched hat. Siebel displayed himself in a student's cap, a smart blue doublet, and pigeon-grey tights. But the chief surprise of the evening was Mephisto, despoiled of his flame-coloured doublet and hose, and clothed in sober black velvet, with a cloak shading from black to light red, and a wide black beaver, over which waved a scarlet plume. Moreover, this new Mephisto no longer sprang from the depths of the earth,

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi.]

but entered by the door like any common visitor. And the whole piece had undergone a similar metamorphosis. There was a German kermess almost equalling the famous Flemish one of Rubens, and the company of soldiers defiled past in realistic fashion, weary and footsore, in soiled and ragged uniforms, carrying torn banners captured from the enemy. Every scene had been renewed at great cost; there was a rumour of the trifling expenditure of a clear million to mark the advent of the new management. And, after all, this formidable outlay was nothing to that required to fit society for this frivolous solemnity. The living decorations of the auditorium, that marvellous parterre of human flowers, had cost quite as great an effort, and we may be sure that no million would begin to pay for all those toilettes.

Similar reflections arise when we attend any one of the great races which draw a throng of Parisiennes to Auteuil, Longchamp, or Chantilly. What, after all, do the efforts of trainers or jockeys amount to compared with those of the dressmakers and their charming clients? If you are in the slightest degree a connoisseur, you have but to cast your eye over the grand-stand on a Grand Prix day. In bright spring sunshine the scene is one of enchantment. Here you behold woman the flower, woman the humming-bird, in all her splendour. The gowns are of an infinite variety of hues—here of gorgeous richness, there of ineffable delicacy; the hats display all the marvel of spring petals, all the gloss and sheen of birds' wings, all the glittering colour-play of metals, scales, and jewels. And it is the moment of the year when all tints are of the



GARDENS OF THE TUILERIES





## CH. vi.] OF WOMEN IN PARIS

utmost softness and intensity, when eyes seem to sparkle with the brightest light, and lips to curve in the softest smiles.

This is the crowning hour in which to catch on one's palette the fleeting colour of Paris : a wonderful scene indeed—an hour of intoxicating poetry and palpitating art, all the more moving because of its evanescence.

How much toil and care it represents ! What riches swallowed up in order to make a brilliant entrance on the scene, behind prancing steeds or in a thundering auto, to attract the gaze of the multitude for a moment, and then vanish. Must we regret this costly display ? Must we cry out with philanthropists and stoics against this shocking waste ? But is it a waste after all ? Are we sure that all human art would not disappear with the disappearance of luxury ?

Let us now consider the woman of fashion for a moment under a more serious aspect. For she piques herself on her love of art for art's sake, on her keen desire for instruction, on her devotion to her religious duties and solicitude for her neighbour, as shown in numerous charitable works.

As to art for art's sake, she cultivates it at concerts and exhibitions of painting and sculpture. At concerts, when the works of Wagner, César Franck, Grieg, Beethoven, or Berlioz are being performed, the poor soul deserves credit for her endurance, as she understands nothing about these composers, and they bore her to extinction. Moreover, there is no relief, for amidst the formidable

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi.]

din of the orchestra one cannot hear oneself speak, and dares not raise one's voice in the midst of the dilettanti, the worshippers of Wagner and the like—those grim and formidable gentlemen who do not hesitate to call for silence with an accompaniment of appropriate epithets. Exhibitions are less austere, for there one can talk; the pictures do not mind noise, and, accordingly, everyone chatters unblushingly—in fact, it is what everyone goes for. Varnishing days are society functions, almost equal to the Grand Prix or the day of Drags. One could fancy oneself in a vast salon, and, indeed, do not most of the exhibitions call themselves “the Salon”? As for the pictures—well, after all, it is very kind of society to make them a pretext for coming together in such numbers. And what have the artists to complain of? If no one came to look at their work but connoisseurs and genuine admirers, the great halls would be very nearly empty, which would be dismal enough. Such a crowd of delicious little women are an immense advertisement for the artists, and give the impression that painting and sculpture are still a power in the world, and, consequently, are worthy of encouragement by wealthy amateurs, as well as by the Minister of Fine Arts, and the mighty Kings of Petroleum, Iron, Cotton, Smoked and Salted Meats, and Poisonous Preserves, who reign in the United States of America.

Let these graceful chatterers once abandon the exhibitions, and all is over with the trade in many-coloured canvasses.

As for instruction, the society woman pursues it at the

## CH. vi.] OF WOMEN IN PARIS

Sorbonne or at lectures. These forms of diversion are much less run after than the exhibitions, but one finds very dainty creatures even here. Some of them go to hear M. Bergson—these are the spiritualists; others prefer to listen to M. Izoulet—these constitute the cream of the students of sociology; others still are interested in M. Faguet; but a greater number yet enjoy M. Frédéric Masson. And, above all, they flock at this moment to hear M. Jules Lemaître.

M. Bergson relates mysterious things concerning the affinities between spirit and matter. M. Izoulet lifts his voice in behalf of a modern city which he proposes to found on an exalted moral system drawn from the works of Darwin and Lemarck; he has a prodigious memory, and intermingles his abstractions with piquant anecdotes. M. Faguet has great verve; his is a searching, roving mind which tastes all the viands and sips all the draughts of the human intellect. M. Frédéric Masson, on the other hand, knows but one man and one work; but what a man and what a work!—nothing less than Napoleon Bonaparte, General of the Republic and Emperor of the French. It can be truly said that M. Masson has studied him with every spyglass and microscope afforded by anecdotic history. Far be it from him to forget the minutest detail of Napoleon's costume, or the most insignificant act of his private life. M. Masson's brain is exclusively a Bonapartist museum, where are to be found crowns and boot-nails, cocked hats and snuff-boxes, side by side with original and profound views and just observations, which throw a singular light on

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi.]

the terrible figure of that destroyer of men, that tragic maker of glory.

M. Jules Lemaître relates a host of delectable things about Jean Jacques Rousseau and Jean Racine. After conducting a Boulangist campaign throughout France, —with great spirit be it said—this exquisite essayist returned to his chosen pursuit, which is the dissection of souls, more or less illustrious. He displays therein a subtle, piquant, and varied art; but while he has lost nothing of his delicate verve and peculiarly French irony, he has certainly somewhat narrowed his horizon in his passage from scepticism to reaction. However, he pleases the fair ladies all the more on that account; for if, in spite of his marvellous clearness of style, they do not always understand him, at least they are aware that he is defending their position and privileges against those dreadful Radicals, who are attacking wealth and seeking to destroy elegance, and who may even be preparing to guillotine the *élégantes* themselves, as did the savage peasantry in 1793.

The duties of religion attract the élite of Paris to the Madeleine, Ste Clotilde, and certain other churches. The Madeleine is their principal centre, partly on account of its size, and partly because this parish has a staff of eminent and well-bred priests. At heart Parisiennes are not devout, although there are pious women among them, and these church parades on Sundays and holy days may be accused of presenting too great an air of frivolity. Nearly all of these sinners are thinking of the world and its pomps; their piety does not enable



THE MADELEINE



## CH. vi.] OF WOMEN IN PARIS

them to divest themselves entirely of those poses which they are wont to assume in salons, at races, and at the theatre, and the perfumes of their toilettes blend a little too powerfully with the perfume of the incense. They make a brave effort, however ; a great many even condemn themselves to walk to church, and some very fine ladies have been observed in doubtful weather mounting the steps of the Madeleine armed with umbrellas. The spiteful assert that these umbrellas are usually left in the church, and that miscreants, aware of this fact, have profited by it to provide themselves, at small expense, with *riflards* of exceptional quality. For my part, I prefer the method pointed out by Alphonse Karr. This humourist insisted that if one wished to secure an umbrella to one's taste, it was only necessary to wait under a *porte-cobère* during a shower. As soon as you caught sight of an umbrella you fancied, you stepped forward quickly and said to the person carrying it : " Excuse me, sir, or madam, I cannot be mistaken ; that is surely my umbrella you have there." The person addressed became confused, stammered some inaudible excuse, and handed you the umbrella. For, asserted Karr, it is a fact that no one ever has his own umbrella.

If women of the world are only moderately religious, they are all charitable to a degree, provided that charity takes certain forms. One of the favourite forms is getting up a fête for the poor, and one of the most efficacious ways of raising money is to add a charity sale to the fête, or, if one prefers it, to organize the fête around a charity sale. Women of fashion delight in turning sales-



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi

women. They bring a fund of benevolent ardour to the task ; they also introduce into it a lively spirit of emulation and the keenest rivalry. It is a contest of influence, grace, and beauty, a question of who can sell the most and the dearest.

It sometimes happens that one who has taken enormous pains does a less thriving business than another who confines herself to waiting with a smile on her lips ; it is only that this latter happens to possess charm, brilliancy of colouring, pure rhythm of outline, or that indescribable something which is the final grace of woman. That being the case, she may offer a pink for two louis, a rose for a hundred francs, a common fan for a five-hundred or a thousand-franc bank-note ; she will find ready purchasers. It is true that others also sell miraculously, in spite of sallow faces, dull eyes, and figures resembling a leek or a barrel : it is a question of prestige. When one is the Duchesse de T., the Marquise de N., the Princesse C. de B., or merely the wife of the multi-millionaire K., all the men must submit. They will make a wry face later, but they are resigned, after all, to paying their tribute.

It happened a few years ago that one of these fêtes ended in disaster—a terrible conflagration, which destroyed the Charity Bazaar. It broke out so suddenly and with such fury that a frightful panic ensued, in which the men showed themselves far more cowardly than the women, and more brutal than cowardly. There perished under these tragic conditions many charming and distinguished women bearing the greatest names in

## CH. vi.] OF WOMEN IN PARIS

France, some even of royal lineage. All Paris was plunged into mourning, and the memory is not yet effaced.

Before leaving society, we must not omit to mention its minor pleasures—those, perhaps, which a woman most enjoys; such as tea at Topsy's or Rumpelmeyer's, where throngs partake of light dainties and sip their tea or chocolate, enjoying a brief interval of blended repose and *gourmandise* amid the rush of a busy existence. There is also the diversion of a turn in the Bois for a breath of fresh air, either on horseback, amid the cushions of a landau or victoria, or in an automobile; in the latter case the excursion may be extended beyond the gates to St Cloud, Sèvres, or Versailles, or even further in these days, when space has been practically annihilated. Finally, there are the rapid winter trips to the Riviera and the South of France.

We must sum up this brief sketch of Parisian society with a word about the Lyceum—that international women's club, partly social and partly intellectual, which the ladies of Paris have recently founded in imitation of their London sisters. This institution is due to the inspiration of Miss Constance Smedley, who, a few years ago, conceived the idea of a vast international association of intellectual and cultivated women. Our readers are doubtless aware that she succeeded in 1904 in opening the magnificent Lyceum in Piccadilly. Miss Alys Hallard then came over to stir up her French friends and persuade them to carry out Miss Smedley's ideas, and thus our Lyceum Club was started. It includes two

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi.

departments—the club, properly speaking, and a feminine association for the encouragement of literature, the arts and sciences, and humanitarian work. The committee consists of the Duchesse d'Uzès; Mme. Schmahl, the celebrated leader of the Feminist movement; Mme. Alphonse Daudet, widow of the famous novelist; Mme. Besnard, the wife of the distinguished painter; the Comtesse de Puliga, who, under the pseudonym of Brada, has made for herself a well-deserved literary reputation; Mmes. Soulanges-Bodin, Cogniet, Breslau, Massieu, Biollay, and Miss Williams. The list of members includes many names well known in fashionable circles, as well as in the realm of art and literature. The club is exclusive, and only admits to its membership after a severe sifting of candidates; it is even hinted that some influential members wish to carry this exclusiveness too far.

Far removed from society, but in close connection with the theatre, and much in evidence at the races, at the Bois, and at certain fêtes, moves the demi-monde. It is impossible to depict this class with any detail; our readers would reprove us for doing so. We can only say that the demi-mondaines whom one sees at these resorts are not outdone in style and good looks by the women of the world. This style may be at times a trifle showy, and the bearing of these ladies may lack distinction, but in many cases the elegance of the toilettes is perfect, and vies with that of the most aristocratic of the duchesses or multi-millionairesses. At Longchamp or at the steeple-chase of Auteuil this group often outshines in



BOULEVARD MALESHERBES



## CH. vi.]      OF WOMEN IN PARIS

these respects the fashionable world, which necessarily includes a sprinkling of personages of mature years and unprepossessing appearance.

The theatre occupies a position of extreme importance in Paris, both as regards dramatic act, properly speaking, and as regards the material details of the stage, its myriad showy and frivolous accessories, its gossip, its witty and scandalous anecdotes. The love of the theatre has spread of late to a deplorable extent, and it is to be feared that it will develop still further, for this form of amusement exercises an unwholesome fascination over the young. I will not assert that it tends to corrupt public morals, which is perhaps not true, but it certainly leads to effeminacy, contributes to our present state of sluggish inertia, and woefully emphasizes the artificial side of our highly-artificial modern life.

Withal, our theatrical stars excite an insatiable interest; the reviews, the newspapers, the magazines, are filled with their pictures, and with pointless anecdotes of their sayings and doings. If a Réjane, a Sarah Bernhardt, a Bartet, a Marthe Régnier, a Cécile Sorel, etc., women undoubtedly of great talent, had made the most important discoveries in science, written the greatest books, painted the most splendid pictures, maintained the profoundest philosophical theses, or even won the most glorious battles; were they at one and the same time Newton, Faraday, Ampère, Pasteur, Curie, Helmholtz, Shakespeare, Balzac, Kant, Bacon, Comte, Rembrandt, Velasquez, Titian, Watteau, Frederic the Great, Napoleon, and Wellington, they could not be more talked about.

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi.]

This state of affairs is rapidly becoming unendurable.

What though our queens of the theatre form, on the whole, a phalanx such as can be matched nowhere else, is this a reason why we should be possessed by a mania for knowing what Mme. Réjane eats, how she brings up her children, how she plans out her daily routine of work, what her sensations are in playing such and such a part, whether she likes sunshine and detests rainy weather, and what her views are on the present size of hats ? or what schemes Sarah Bernhardt has on foot, what she says to her dogs, how she dotes on her son and her grandchildren, what young man's part she thinks of playing next, whether or not she is to be decorated with the Legion of Honour ? A plague upon all this imbecile interviewing, imported from America ! There, at least, the interviewer only reflects the inveterate folly of the masses, not, as with us, their effeminacy.

There is a fourth class of women who have been much before the public eye during the last dozen years : this is the literary class. In 1890 they hardly counted for anything ; they are now on the way to become, if not all-powerful, at least formidable, boon. This is a blessing—or an evil—which Great Britain has enjoyed much longer than we. Whichever it may be, these ladies are marching in serried ranks to the conquest of the reviews, the newspapers, and the publishing-houses. Every month they can count a victory. They number poets in their ranks, among whom may be named : Marie Krizinska, Mme. Catulle Mendès, Hélène Picard, the

## CH. vi.]      OF WOMEN IN PARIS

Comtesse Mathieu de Noailles, Lucie Delarue Mardrus, Mme. A. Daudet, Mme. Henri de Régnier, Mme. F. Greggh; and their successes equal those of Messrs. de Régnier, Moréas, and Verhaeren. And they have novelists, such as Mmes. Rachilde, Judith Gautier, Myriam Harry, Jean Pommerol, Daniel Lesueur, Brada, Marcelle Tinayre, Jeanne Landre, Gérard d'Honville, Judith Cladel, Georges de Peyrebrune, Jacques Vincent, Colette Yrer, Mme. Leconte de Nouy, Jean de la Brète, Colette Willy, Marie Anne de Bovet, Séverine, Mme. de Pierrebourg, etc., of widely varying talents, but alike in their success. They write *chroniques* for the newspapers, essays and articles for the reviews, books of travel, etc., and in all these lines they have cut out their masculine rivals, and have left them agape with wonder at their verve and spirit, and vanquished by their ability, patience, and productiveness. They have pseudo-academies of their own, which will soon become real academies, and which already give annual prizes for poetry and literature, one of these being the "Happy Life" prize of 5,000 francs, which they sometimes have the malice to confer upon a male being. It may be confidently predicted that in the course of twenty years or so they will have appropriated to themselves the field of fiction, and there will only remain here and there an occasional writer of stories of adventure to recall the antique masculine genius.

These representatives of their sex have started a woman's movement on a vast scale. In their wake women are slipping into the post and telegraph offices;



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi.]

they excel in the art of typewriting, and are becoming secretaries, cashiers, and book-keepers; their number increases in the medical profession; they are entering the Bar, and have an eye upon the magistracy; they will vote to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow they will rule. The arguments by which they were formerly kept in subjection have no longer any weight with these emancipated souls. They do not recognize any mental inferiority on their part, and they laugh to scorn the so-called wisdom of man—a wisdom which has never shown itself in relation to woman, except by a tyranny alternately crafty and brutal; and they consider it absurd in the highest degree when they are advised to reign by the strictly feminine gifts of grace and beauty.

“Ah, yes,” cries one of their leaders; “doubtless beauty and grace are weapons, if one happens to have them; but pray, how many women in a hundred are possessed of these gifts? Enter a salon, a theatre, an omnibus, a railway-station; look at the women you meet in the streets: you will be very sharp-sighted if you can discover five or six pretty women out of every hundred, and seven or eight who have actual charm. It is true, gentlemen, that we are not as ugly as you, but we are not far behind you. Ugliness, in fact, is the natural condition of both sexes, and to advise a woman to enter the conflict armed with her beauty is to condemn nine women out of ten to defeat. A good situation, lucrative work—that is what we are looking for; the rest will follow.”

And what answer can we make to this?

## CH. vi.]      OF WOMEN IN PARIS

We have still to speak of the women-servants of Paris, who form an imposing corporation, with which one is obliged to reckon. This little populace of the attics and back-stairs holds its secret meetings, where it deliberates and makes laws, quite like our deputies and senators, and masters and tradesmen alike have learned to tremble before its demands and exactions.

We have only to reflect that on the cook may depend the success of a dinner given to an influential functionary, who is also an epicure, and that by this dinner may stand or fall the election or decoration of monsieur, the host! Let us consider, also, that madame's reputation as a pretty and well-dressed woman may depend in great part on the skill and taste of her maid; that, in order to keep Mélanie's custom, the marketman is obliged to allow her a sou to the franc on the sale of all his poultry and game; and that the coal-dealer is obliged to allow her a certain percentage on all the coal he delivers. It is needless to add that under these conditions the honest coal-dealer delivers 50-kilo sacks of coal which only weigh 45 kilos. And this little tithe is exacted on all provisions, thus permitting *cordons-bleus*—unworthy successors of the upright Brillat Savarin—to become householders with ease and rapidity. The mistress of a house told us recently that a cook had refused to enter her service on learning that madame received only once a week. She could not do with less than 300 francs a month, and her wages being 100, it would be impossible, under these circumstances, for her to make up honestly, in "little profits," the extra 200 francs. For the past two years Paris has

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vi.]

had its cabwomen (*cochères*), who, in defiance of gallantry and the respect due to the fair sex, have been subjected to severe examinations before being admitted to the honours of the whip, the top-coat, and the oilcloth hat.

We may also look forward in the near future to seeing the introduction of women as guardians of museums and picture-galleries, M. Clémenceau having decided—quite justly, moreover—that they are as capable of filling these offices as their bearded brethren.

Women of the world and of the theatre, literary women, feminists, cooks, and cabwomen—these are, after all, but a small proportion of the feminine population; and this enumeration does not suffice to give a general notion of the Parisian women; in fact, a bulky volume, ten volumes, a hundred even, would not suffice. We must have recourse, therefore, to impressions. Let us imagine an intelligent foreigner, a close observer without prejudice, who has made the round of Paris from Auteuil to Ménilmontant, from the Batignolles to La Râpée, from Belleville to Montparnasse, who has frequented society and popular resorts, and has loitered among the common people, listening to their talk and studying their ways. He would observe, without doubt, that the women of Paris are average mortals, neither more stupid nor more intelligent, neither prettier nor more elegant, than the women of other great European capitals. He would discover that they are for the most part poor and unfortunate, that they struggle against an untoward destiny in the midst of a society which does



MARKET AT PLACE DE L'ALMA



CH. vi.]      OF WOMEN IN PARIS

not readily come to their aid. And yet he would be forced to admit that among such a host of insignificant creatures there are a greater number than can be found elsewhere who know how to dress, who can walk with grace, and who have a certain taste of their own. He would notice a special turn of thought common to the dweller in the Champs Elysées and to the working woman of Rochechouart, which shows itself in witty, just, clearly expressed, and often ironical remarks, directed, it may be, against some trait of manners, some custom of the day, some folly or eccentricity, and which is called French *esprit*. He would notice, also, that the women of Paris, though not of a mystical or religious turn of mind, are apt to be superstitious; and he will not omit to note their tact and good sense. Their coquetry will seem to him rather highly developed; their morals may strike him as somewhat free—less so, however, than he has been led to believe; and he will acknowledge that in seven cases out of ten the Parisienne is industrious, and hides beneath her light exterior solid qualities of order, foresight, and economy.

After which, if the intelligent stranger be a Londoner, he will decide that the Parisienne is inferior to the London woman; if he is an inhabitant of Berlin, that she is inferior to her Berlin sister; if he is a Roman, that she does not equal the Roman woman; if he is from Tokyo, that she is a hundred degrees below the ladies of Tokyo; and if he comes from Constantinople, that she deserves to be sewn up in a sack and drowned in the Bosphorus.

## CHAPTER VII

### Of Journalists and Journalism

Historical Sketch—First French Newspaper—Commercial Journalism—  
The Interview—Decline of Criticism—Literature—The Académie  
Française—The Académie Goncourt

**H**OW is it possible to give an account of the press of our day without at least outlining the history of journalism? Literature is of all time; journalism is of yesterday. The aims of the one are more disinterested than those of the other, the newspaper, as compared with the book, being chiefly a means of action.

France disputes with other nations the honour of having published the first printed sheet, and the fame of Théophraste Renaudot, that physician of the seventeenth century who changed his profession and became a journalist, grows greater each day among us. The first newspaper founded by Renaudot was called *The Gazette*. It appeared once a week, and was especially devoted to the spread of news. Its appearance was followed almost immediately by that of other sheets. The *Journal des Savants* was issued from the press for the first time in 1655, and the *Mercure Galant*, a lighter and gayer sheet, the first journal steeped in the colour of Paris, appeared in 1672. The press, however, was far from free at this time; it possessed, in fact, no liberty whatever. Throughout the seventeenth century the licence to print was accorded with great difficulty, and about the middle of the eighteenth a law was enacted, condemning to death the author or printer of any writing "tending to attack



IN FRONT OF ST. EUSTACHE





religion and the authority of the King, or to disturb public order and the tranquillity of the State." For less serious misdemeanours the King had the Bastille, in which to silence those voices which were raised too loudly.

These are reasons sufficient to explain why the appearance of the first daily journal was so long delayed. At the close of the eighteenth century it was finally announced, and by January 1, 1777, it was in circulation, being hawked about and sold under the title of *Le Journal de Paris*. It is evident that the ideas which presided over the birth of the new journal had been long maturing, for it was already provided with a varied and defined series of headings, such as: "Literature," "Administration," "Public Events," "The Courts," "Plays," "Fashions," "The Bourse," "Weddings and Funerals."

The *Journal de Paris* marks a date in the history of journalism.

Twelve years later occurs another date of far greater importance—that of the capture of the Bastille in 1789, which, with the declaration of the Rights of Man, inaugurated a new era for human liberty. The Constitution of 1791 declares that "The free communication of thought and opinion is one of the most precious rights of man"; it guarantees to all citizens "freedom of speech, of writing, and of printing, without such writing being subjected to any censorship or inspection previous to publication."

Thus the freedom of the press was assured, and from that day forth journalism became a power in the world. Doubtless, in the course of the succeeding century, the

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vii.

various Governments did not hesitate to impose checks on this power. The Directory lost no time in seeking to restrain the new-born liberty; the First Consul endeavoured to stifle it, but liberty once tasted, the love of it is not easily quenched.

The Emperor fell, and hardly had he quitted the soil of France when the principles of 1789 were recognized and proclaimed anew. The Restoration owed it to herself to contend against these principles, but Napoleon, on his return from Elba, made it his first care to restore the freedom of the press. He began to believe in liberty at the moment when France ceased to believe in him. Then commenced the long and glorious struggle between the parties of reaction and of revolution. In 1820 the people lost the freedom of the press, to regain it in the insurrection of July, 1830; once again it was snatched from them, once again they recovered it. The Revolution of 1848 afforded them the opportunity to erect the public tribune anew and to strengthen its foundations. It will not again be overthrown; and when Napoleon III attempts in his turn to gag the press, he invariably sees his official journals confronted by independent organs, and his courtiers by men undaunted at the threat of paying with their personal freedom for freedom of speech. Shall we cite a few of the names which distinguished the history of the press in those heroic days?

The brothers Bertin, who founded the *Journal des Débats* at the close of the eighteenth century, were arrested, imprisoned, exiled, and despoiled by the Emperor. There is no greater name than theirs in the journalism of



PONT ROYAL



## CH. vii.] OF JOURNALISTS

the period. Under the Restoration we find among the journalists Châteaubriand, Benjamin Constant, Paul Louis Courier, Jouffroy, Sainte Beuve.

The first *Figaro* made its appearance in 1822. Jules Janin, Alphonse Karr, and Roqueplan were its chief contributors. In 1835 Emile de Girardin in his turn inaugurated *La Presse*, the first cheap newspaper, on whose staff figured many famous names, such as Balzac, Alexandre Dumas, Théophile Gautier, Victor Hugo. The *Presse* met with immense success, numbering 20,000 subscribers in the first few months.

Under the Second Empire Nefftzer founded the *Temps*, and Villemessant launched the *Figaro*. But those who chiefly contributed to give a fresh impulse to journalism at this period were the leaders of the Opposition, Alphonse Peyrat, Havin, Henri Rochefort, Adolphe Guérout, Eugène Pelletan, Charles Delescluze, and so many others who, by means of the press, carried on a conflict without respite against the Government of Napoleon III.

It has been asserted, not without reason, that at no period of our history was the rôle of the press so important as immediately after the fall of the Empire. The press had to contend at that epoch both for its own complete emancipation and for the spread of those liberal ideas which should assure that emancipation for the future. The elections of July 2, 1871, while securing the triumph of the Republic, did not bring about at once the absolute freedom of the press; and the laws of July 6

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vii.

and September 4 and 16 diminished this freedom rather than increased it.

The reactionaries, moreover, were making another attempt to regain power. From May 24, 1872, to May 16, 1877, a desperate struggle was carried on by all those writers for the press who wished to prevent the restoration of the monarchy and to save the Republic. The elections of October, 1877, demonstrated the influence of journalism upon public opinion. When Gambetta addressed a formal summons to Macmahon to "submit or resign," the republican press, which sustained the great tribune, was entitled to claim a share in bringing about this important political result.

The leading factors at this period are, on the one hand, the thorough understanding and agreement among the republican journals of all shades, and, on the other, their ardent spirit and energy of purpose.

The date of May 16 witnessed the rise of a brilliant pleiad of polemical writers—Edmond About in the *XIXme Siècle*, John Lemoine in the *Débats*, Emile de Girardin in *La France*, Edmond Lockroy, Camille Pelletan in the *Rappel*; and the editors of the *Temps*, the *République Française*, the *Lanterne*, the *Marseillaise*, and the *Bien Public* were in the front rank of the militant party at this heroic period.

On the morrow of the elections of 1877, which secured the stability of the existing régime, this perfect understanding between the republican organs began to relax. Nothing could be more natural. The press is the mirror in which all phases of evolution in the thought of



EVENING AT PONT ALEXANDRE III





## CH. vii.] OF JOURNALISTS

a great country are reflected. About the year 1879 there was a split in the republican party, the Moderates slackening their pace the more because they had before their eyes the over-accelerating speed of the Radical wing; and the political press reflected this double movement. *L'Intransigeant*, the ultra-Radical sheet of Henri Rochefort, and *La Justice*, in which political and literary men collaborated under the direction of Georges Clémenceau, became the advanced organs of this period.

Moreover, an event of great importance in the history of French journalism occurs at this time, this being the law of July 19, 1881, which secures its absolute freedom. It becomes possible henceforth for every man to utter and publish his ideas without restriction.

This seems at first sight a dangerous licence, which, by giving free vent to all opinions, may lead to the worst abuses. The application of the law of 1881 did, in fact, produce extreme results by enabling anarchy—that doctrine so dear to men animated by immoderate zeal for freedom and independence—to set up its organs at once.

The greatest menace to journalism, however, during the period inaugurated by the law of 1881, and extending to our own day, has not come from the free expression of ideas; the danger lay, and still lies, in the opposite direction.

The journalism whose aim was the discussion and spread of advanced thought is more and more threatened, and at this very moment the political press is on the verge of eclipse, through the rise of the newspaper, properly so called, which tends to supersede it.

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vii.]

In 1881, a new journal, *Le Matin*, introduced the interview—that form of journalism peculiar to America; and reporting, thus started, rapidly assumed a growing importance in the French press. It is replacing by degrees, in the principal papers, all articles of discussion, criticism, and the dissemination of ideas.

The collection of news has become the chief object, and will soon be the only object, of those great sheets which vie with each other to-day in spreading the latest intelligence. Their ambition is to carry to their readers every morning an echo of the news of the day all over the world. It is a question of cheap and rapid production, which puts the press on the same plane as other branches of business. Journalism is becoming industrialized.

It is no easy problem to seek out the results of this journalistic evolution, of which one feature at least seems not to have received sufficient attention. The number of newspaper readers is constantly on the increase, and it is these new recruits which the ultra-modern press, the press which is becoming exclusively a collector and disseminator of news, seeks to secure and retain. It would be rash to predict its success. It must, in fact, be observed that, while the number of guests is on the increase, the quality of the viands offered them is far from good, the cuisine is often a trifle hurried, and the dishes are apt to be served in a somewhat pell-mell fashion. The newspapers have developed with great rapidity, and this is a capital thing, but the question is now whether, in the near future, news is to replace every other form of entertainment. The spread of information is doubtless the first

## CH. vii.] OF JOURNALISTS

object of a newspaper; the public must be informed as to events in general—nothing could be better; and if there be, among the symptoms of degeneracy which we have been forced to point out, a sign of increasing activity and intelligence, it is this persistent desire on the part of the public to acquaint themselves in detail with the events going on all over the world. Such curiosity is a new thing, as far as the French public is concerned. All the better if we are beginning to be aware of the existence of a world outside ourselves. We shall thus be aroused to a clearer sense of proportion; we shall understand the necessity of accomplishing certain results; we shall strive, perhaps, to reform our social conditions, to establish equality for all, with the guarantees of a clearly-defined social contract; we shall wage a decisive war against ignorance and poverty. We have only to will all this, and the press can aid greatly in bringing it to pass. The mere spread of information, however, will not suffice. Certain journals have understood this, and while devoting much of their attention to the securing of news and to accurate commentary thereupon, hold it their duty, at the same time, to instruct their readers on political and sociological questions, and besides all this, to include in their pages a lively chronicle of contemporary manners, literature, and art. It is this many-sided *exposé* which should be the programme of all newspapers.

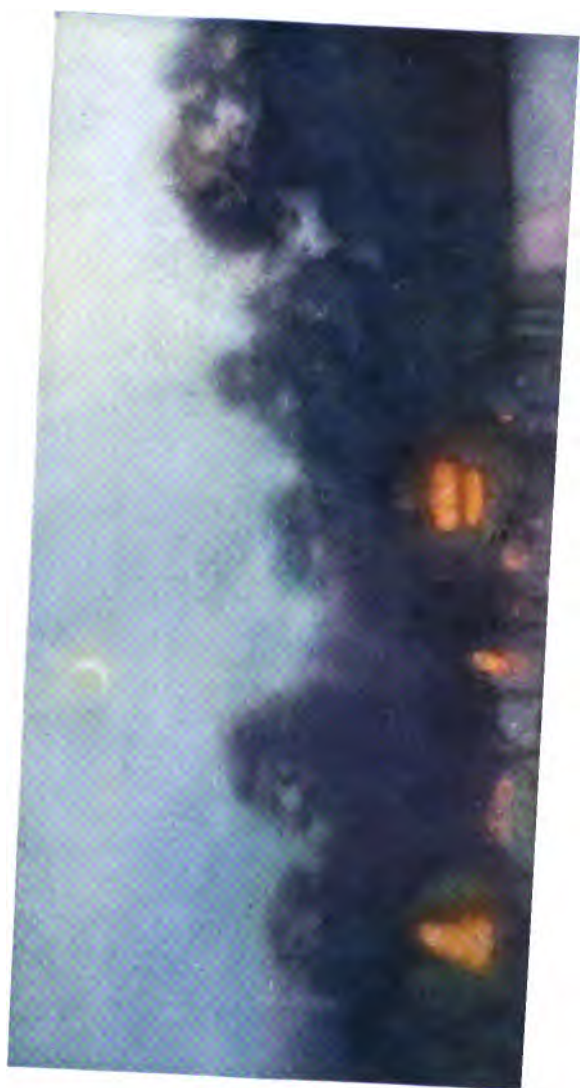
To represent public opinion is a laudable aim, but it is a much higher and nobler one to educate and direct that opinion. Information is a prime necessity, but the commentary on that information can never be too ex-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vii.]

tensive or too serious. Reporting has already developed certain gifts of observation and reasoning; but let us never cease to demand from the journals of all parties the expression of opinion and the discussion of general ideas through the medium of those flying sheets which last but a day or an hour.

Such rapidly-penned articles may have a lasting value. Some masterly writers have, indeed, devoted their whole lives to journalism, to the political leading article, and to criticism. That there must be a difference between the improvisations of the daily journal and the work of a stylist—a work deliberately conceived and elaborated for years—goes without saying. But it is not difference of method alone which accounts for this journalistic inferiority. The works which have been most deeply thought out contain pages due to improvisation, which have sprung into life spontaneously in the midst of the daily task. Power of intellect makes itself apparent, whatever be the form of its manifestation, and can never be a negligible quality. Châteaubriand and Lamartine as journalists were always themselves, and if the reader exclaims that a Châteaubriand and a Lamartine are rare in journalism, it must not be overlooked that they are rare in literature as well. Under every condition and on all subjects a skilful writer can give proof of his originality of thought, his grace, and power of expression.

The form employed, whether newspaper or book, is secondary. He who is born to think or write will think and write in spite of all and in defiance of all. He may suffer from the narrow obligations of a trade, from the





## CH. vii.] OF JOURNALISTS

forced habit of daily labour at fixed hours, when the power of reflection is often lacking, or the weary brain longs for repose; he may envy the leisure of authors free to follow their fancy and to tread the path of life at a pace adapted to observation, or to shut themselves up in their study and give their whole soul to the subtle alchemy which mingles and combines ideas and words; but he will persevere, nevertheless, in his round of labour, in the steady building-up of his work.

The writers are not many whose time is their own. Those authors who enter on a literary career with a fortune sufficient to supply their necessities are never in a majority. The moneyed world does not seem to be the most favourable soil for the growth of literary genius.

Therefore the daily journal, multiplied and widespread as it now is, offers itself as a fitting field to the man of letters, or, rather, did so offer itself, for the times are changing, and we see before our very eyes the rapid evolution of commercial journalism.

We have recently received a letter from a writer of ability, who wishes to go on living by his pen, and by the work to which he is accustomed, and who propounded to us the following questions: "What journals are still hospitable to the chronicle of events (*la chronique*)? Which to literary or artistic criticism?" Our correspondent was evidently well informed in regard to the present state of literary criticism, since he asked parenthetically: "Is it possible to resuscitate it?" Literary criticism is not yet dead, however, although it seems in



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vii.

a decline; the same is true of the *chronique*. The art critique dies hard, because it can be made an agreeable pretext for strolls through the salons and galleries. Theatrical criticism is more vigorous still, especially such as concerns the daily reporting of plays. We all know that the reason for its permanence lies in the fact that the theatre is the only diversion now offered to humanity.

What is the cause of this decline? The *chronique* has its purpose, the literary critique also. The subjects treated of in such criticism and chronicle are a vital part of a nation's life, and the journals which have suppressed these heads in order to replace them by endless narrations of the sayings and doings of big or petty swindlers and criminals fail to reflect a complete image of our times.

We must take note, moreover, that such newspapers, by their very nature, renounce all chance of exercising a real and enduring influence, and for lack of such genuine influence they will find themselves thrown aside as easily as they were welcomed.

We can but hope, therefore, that we are passing through a period of transition. Doubtless the public will always demand facts, and will insist more and more that they shall be of interest, and reported with the greatest possible accuracy; but it will also call for ideas and opinions. Intellectual journalism will then again have the success which it deserves.

As to the criticism of works of art and of original thought, for which place is still found in a few news-

## CH. vii.] OF JOURNALISTS

papers, and which forms an important part of the contents of certain reviews, the newspapers themselves would find it to their advantage to revive it.

Meanwhile there is a unanimous opinion that literary criticism is dying out, which is probably quite true; and what is worse still is that it is not allowed to die a natural death. It is the advertisement which is killing it by inches. As for the advertisement, its end may come next. It will doubtless go on for some time longer deceiving those simple people who believe that they can cure their colds or make their hair grow by carefully reading, and strictly following, the advice offered them by the daily press; but the time is surely coming when they will be fooled no longer. And when it is generally understood that an editor will launch a book and its author for cash considerations, when it is known that the biography of a painter or sculptor is paid for in coin of the realm like the puff of a druggist's syrup or pills, or else is paid "in kind" by a picture, a pastel, a work in marble or bronze, then the public will laugh printed judgments to scorn, and will cease to buy the books and works of art thus recommended. No one, then, whether author, artist, or publisher, will care any longer to have his work recommended by writers whose pen is known to be for sale, and purchasers will prefer to trust to luck or to their own taste.

It is thus that enterprise sometimes overreaches itself, and that the possessors of hens which lay golden eggs are foolish enough to kill their fowls.

I claim, in fact, that, by suppressing all free and serious

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vii.]

criticism in their papers, the editors are cutting off their chief source of profit, and I can prove it.

I was talking the other day with one of these newspaper editors, whose ideal is the *écho payé*, and I was reproaching him for having nothing but these venal book-notices in his paper. "But," he ingenuously replied, "do not the publishers make money by the books they sell? Isn't it just, then, that they should pay us when we help them to introduce their products? Isn't that perfectly logical and fair?" "Oh yes, perfectly," I agreed; "only, by inserting nothing but paid notices of books and works of art, you are undoubtedly killing the trade of the booksellers and art-dealers."

"How is that?" "Your paid notices do not always tell. In fact, they only tell occasionally, since the majority of books so announced do not sell any better than others. It requires a certain combination of circumstances to insure the success of a book. For that reason authors and publishers will grow weary in the end of squandering their money uselessly. The author would keep on, perhaps, for the pleasure of hearing his genius proclaimed, even at advertisement rates; but the publisher is not seeking the gratification of his vanity: he will therefore soon tire of his bargain, and you, my dear sir, will no longer have your precious puffs, your *échos payés*. But it will be a different matter if you publish a literary supplement in which contemporary productions are reviewed seriously, impartially, and freely. I say nothing of the intellectual benefit that would ensue to the authors, who need enlightening as

## CH. vii.] OF JOURNALISTS

to their real merits, for I am aware that the merit does not appeal to you. But I assure you that there exists a public for articles of this nature that a writer of conscience and talent, doing this work, would be listened to and the result would be that the books he praises more or less well. That is not the question of sale that would do. How many books have these, then, would sell, and what would the publisher, making a certain profit, would seek to make more, and would accede to an agreement with you to give publicity to what he issued. You would realize by such means much greater profits than you reap now from the business that comes to you through an advertisement. You would be helping to develop the trade and increasing the prosperity of your country at the same time."

"Perhaps you are right. I will think of it. I have excluded the tradesman. He has, in fact, declined, and has decided to suppress the last vestige of criticism which was to be found from time to time in his paper. He is approaching nearer an ideal, which is—to be paid for every line of advertisement. An admirable system, of which we shall see the downfall; for the day will come when you will give up buying a newspaper in order to get the same advertisements which they call for by posters for nothing. Someone will then be seen seeing the unprofitable nature of this advertisement."

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vii.

bine," will start an all-round journal for the benefit of the public. This new transformation of the press may be confidently predicted; for if it does not take place, the press itself will eventually disappear, having become entirely confounded with the business prospectus.

### LITERATURE

The Académie Française, though frequently scoffed at nowadays in France, keeps its European reputation. And yet this venerable institution of ours is far from filling the rôle attributed to it—that of ruling over the domain of letters. The Revolution did not succeed in emancipating the Académie Française, whose most marked characteristic continues to be an obstinate conservatism. During the whole period of the nineteenth century the Académie never ceased to protest against, and condemn, every daring literary venture and every new experiment. About the year 1824, when the movement which was to be known later as Romanticism began to show itself, the Académie did not hesitate to denounce it formally and to make war upon its authors.

"A new literary schism is manifesting itself," cried the director of the society. "Many men brought up in devout reverence for the doctrines of antiquity, consecrated by innumerable masterpieces, are disquieted by the projects of this new sect, and seem to crave reassurance. Shall the Académie Française remain indifferent to their just alarm? And shall the first literary body in

France fear to compromise itself by dispute which concerns all French literature.

Nothing could be more characteristic of the Académie Française claim its right to rule the world of letters.

In the years which followed, the Académie ceased to wage war upon the audacity of those innovators of the period. Lamartine was a member in 1829, but such an election was exceptional—a glorious exception, however, as an antidote to a too-exclusive policy. The door was thus opened, but it required more than a generation before Victor Hugo to force an entrance and to make it anew. Ten years of reiterated assault and the entrance of a Hugo!

Since that period, which already seems so remote, the Académie has not altered its position. It has its *right* and *left*, its Tories and its Whigs. At this present hour the latter are still in the minority. They do not make the laws. The consequence is that for a century the French literary movement has been outside the Académie, just as the French political movement has been outside the Institut.

No doubt the Académie prides itself on the fact that it has welcomed within its doors the two best literary periods of the last century. The period extending from the close of the eighteenth century to our own day, Ernest Renan and Anatole France have not without resistance that it received the opposition which it continues to receive from the ideas and independent men of letters.

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vii.]

why the latter has deliberately ceased to attend its sessions.

The Académie will, perhaps, continue to live, but on condition of transforming itself, and in the words of one of its illustrious members, Sainte Beuve, "of maintaining true relations with a changing society."

Up to this time our National Academy has systematically refused to adapt itself to altered conditions, and as it was hostile to romanticism, so it has been hostile to naturalism. Neither Balzac nor Flaubert were admitted within its doors. The Académie refused to receive Zola, and the Goncourt brothers undertook to create a new centre of influence. The real aim of the Académie Goncourt is, indeed, to encourage, along with literary merit, the spirit of independence; and as time goes on, this aim of the new literary group asserts itself more and more. In truth, it must be admitted that the barriers which are raised between the various literary manifestations of any period speedily break down. Scarcely have labels been affixed than they appear meaningless and out of date. It is sufficient to recall to mind the classification which prevailed nineteen or twenty years ago.

First came the "psychologists," among whom were numbered Anatole France, Jules Lemaître, and Paul Bourget; then there were the "symbolists and decadents," including Verlaine, Stéphane Mallarmé, Jean Moréas, Henri de Régnier, Maeterlinck; then the "naturalists," consisting of the Goncourts, Zola, J. K. Huysmans, Guy de Maupassant, Léon Hennique, Henri Céard, Paul Alexis; the "neo-realists," in whose front

## CH. vii.] OF JOURNALISTS

rank figured Octave Mirbeau, J. H. Rosny, Lucien Descaves, Paul Margueritte, Paul Bonnetain, Gustave Guiche, Jules Renard, Abel Hermant; the "Parnassians," comprising Leconte de Lisle, Catulle Mendès, José Maria de Herédia, Sully Prudhomme, François Coppée, and Armand Sylvestre; finally, the "philosophers," Pierre Lafitte and Renan.

Of this classification, imperfectly given here, what remains? Virtually nothing! "Psychologists," "Naturalists," "Symbolists," and "Parnassians" are so many arbitrary labels of which time has made short work. There has taken place in the nineteenth century what had already occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth. As the seventeenth had seen the birth of Bossuet and La Fontaine, Corneille and Racine, Molière, Pascal, and St Simon, and the eighteenth that of Voltaire and Rousseau, Diderot and Chénier, so the nineteenth has been made illustrious by marked and opposing personalities which have ended by constituting that whole which we call a literary age.

And it would excite only ridicule at present if, in order to distinguish between Anatole France and Octave Mirbeau, we could find nothing to say, save that one was a neo-realist and the other a psychologist.

In truth, there are no schools in literature; there are only individuals.

In the vast whole, we distinguish doubtless certain general tendencies. Each literary age has its currents, and one is forced to admit that it is the realist current which appears to have been the strongest and most

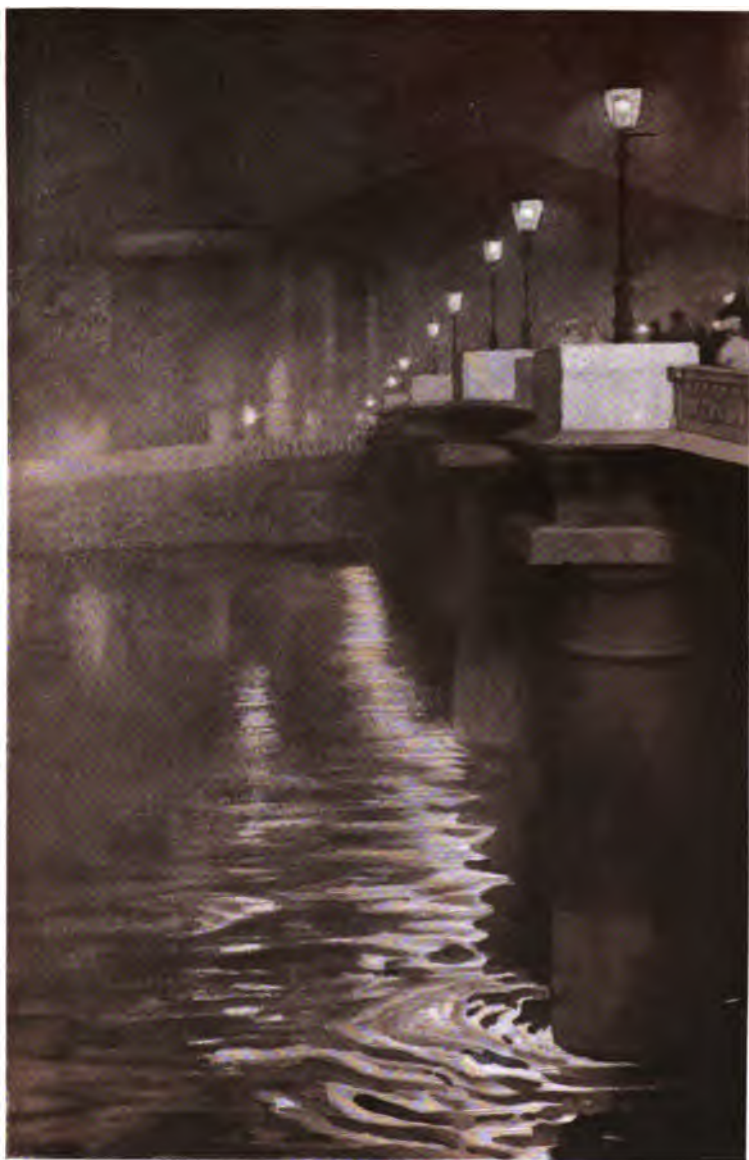


## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. vii.]

marked at the close of the nineteenth century. Balzac, Flaubert, the Goncourts, Daudet, Zola, to speak only of the dead, are those whose work has left the deepest impress on the evolution of ideas in the second half of the century which has just ended. These have seen a larger truth, and have opened wider vistas for humanity. With them literature has become, in some sort, a continuation of life.

VICTOR Hugo often asserted that he was willing to call himself a romanticist if "romanticism" meant the freedom of art. Above all schools there should be the school of freedom in art, and there we should see, as close comrades and neighbours, Ernest Renan and Flaubert, Anatole France and Emile Zola, the Goncourts and Vallès, Alphonse Daudet and Verlaine. All these great figures in our literature have one trait in common: whether poets, novelists or philosophers, they have all looked at life with equal intentness, if not with equal passion.

The great romantic writers are much closer to reality than seems to be generally admitted, and the naturalists have written works in which imagination has played a large part. Neither have greatly cared to follow the rule and formulas of any school. All have been, *a priori*, firm partisans of liberty in art. One need not be a prophet to foresee that it is along this broad channel that the evolution of our literature will flow. The quarrels which stirred the Republic of Letters a score of years ago are forgotten, and we can better understand at the present day Renan's reply to someone who questioned him in regard to sym-



PONT DE LA CONCORDE



CH. vii.]      OF JOURNALISTS

bolists, psychologists, and naturalists. "They are children," he said, "sucking their thumbs."

In literature, as in life, there will always be individuals differing widely in their gifts, full of unexpected and personal traits, and we shall long continue to take pleasure in literary works of apparently the most opposite natures.

## CHAPTER VIII

### Of Military Paris

The Review of July 14—A Cavalry Charge—Compulsory Service—The Garrison of Paris—Triumphs of the Army—A Page of History—The General Staff—The Army and Society—State of Opinion in the Army

**W**HETHER the indisputable adoration of Paris for all things military is a survival from its great epic period—from those intoxicating hours of glory when the victorious eagles soared above our returning armies, when troops were continually defiling before the dazzled eyes of the Parisians; whether the feeling is natural love for that art of war which has been the source of our national greatness as well as of our national misfortunes, or is merely the Parisian taste for the spectacular, which is gratified by that most dazzling of all spectacles, an army on parade, battalions on the march, with dashing officers in brilliant uniforms, warlike music and streaming banners, might be matter for fair argument. We incline to the latter view.

The Parisian delights in all this as he delights in a performance at the opera, but he adds thereto a touch of sentiment, a warm sympathy with the soldier, a thrill of martial ardour, which recalls his Gallic origin. The French Government, therefore, whether it be Imperial or Republican, takes care not to deprive the capital of the spectacle of a great review on the national holiday. The date is not the same under the Republic as under the Empire, but the programme is unaltered, and that is all that matters to the shopman of the Rue du Sentier, the



STATUE OF JEANNE D'ARC



## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

workingman of Belleville, or the student from the Lycée. At present it is on July 14, the anniversary of the capture of the Bastille, that the Minister of War passes in review the entire body of troops constituting the garrison of Paris.

For several days the troops of the department of the Seine, and those of Seine et Oise, have been converging upon Paris. The roads have been thronged with cavalry, artillery, and infantry; the Parisian barracks have overflowed with soldiers of all arms—chasseurs, line regiments, engineers, and marines—the red trousers and blue coats of the foot soldier alternating with the more sober uniform of engineers and the artillery. At dawn of the great day, the regiments about to be reviewed begin to arrive on the race-course of Longchamp, an immense tract of ground, where the troops have ample space for their evolutions. As the day advances one sees these battalions defiling through the avenues of the Bois de Boulogne, descending the slopes of Suresnes, emerging from the park of St Cloud. They include the First Division of cavalry, comprising three brigades, the brigade of engineers belonging to the military government of Paris, the twelve regiments of the line attached to this same force, the 29th Battalion of Foot Guards, the first and third companies of sappers and miners, the second company of artillery, the 20th Squadron of the baggage-train, and, finally, the Republican Guard and the legion of Paris gendarmerie.

As this review is an annual affair, the officers know in advance where their troops are to be posted. Theartil-



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.

lery is drawn up on the spot most remote from the spectators' stand; next comes the cavalry; while the infantry occupies the front ranks. It is a fine sight on a sunny day, this army drawn up in line of battle, the helmets of the dragoons and breastplates of the cuirassiers glittering in the sunlight, while the millions of bayonets carried by the infantry flash their paler fires like moon-rays. The dust-clouds raised by the cavalry and artillery, however, have soon done their worst, and the soldiers who arrive on the field freshly furbished, smart and trim, are soon wrapped in one uniform mantle of dingy grey.

The crowd has also arrived—the true holiday crowd, gaily cheering the troops as they pass. This throng, bright with all the life and colour of Paris, is divided into two streams, one consisting of the élite, who are to occupy the grand-stand; the other of the populace, which swarms over the grassy slopes of the race-ground, especially near the entrance for official equipages.

Sometimes, but rarely, this crowd indulges in noisy demonstrations against the Government. Everyone recalls the hisses which greeted the President of the Republic at the July review of 1888. On that occasion they also hissed the Minister of War, General Terron, and loudly acclaimed General Boulanger, who, although he was under an official cloud at the time, was still the idol of the people and the main hope of the monarchical party. President Loubet, also, at the début of his presidential term, which coincided with the unfortunate Dreyfus affair, came in for his share of unpopularity; and the pleasure of presiding over this great review as head of

## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

the State was embittered for him by these hostile manifestations. The good President always recalled with indignation the treatment to which he was subjected by the fashionable crowd on the grand-stand, where a dastardly member of the aristocracy actually raised his cane against the venerable head of the State. . . .

But to return to the review to which we are about to introduce our readers. Why this prolonged delay, since the troops are already on the field, and the gay white plumes of the cadets from the St Cyr Military Academy have been hailed with cheers? The heat is intense, and the populace has begun to take its ease—citizens in their shirt-sleeves breakfasting and making merry with their families on the grass, while vendors of lemonade and *coco*, by the hundreds, are crying out their wares: "Quite fresh! Who will drink? Two sous a glass." The soldiers, meanwhile, are exposed to a scorching sun; a few even have been overcome by the heat and borne away on stretchers. The seats on the grand-stand are already filled with a smart throng, the plumes in the ladies' hats vying with those of the St Cyrians.

Suddenly a roar of cannon is heard in the direction of Suresne. It is Mont Valérien firing salvoes in honour of the President of the Republic. From the woods around the cascade comes a rising murmur, which swells to a formidable uproar as the President's landau, harnessed *à la Daumont*, with outriders, appear on the parade-ground. The landau is followed by the carriages of the official world, including the diplomatic corps, the ministers, deputies, senators, and magistrates.

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.]

The bands all strike up the *Marseillaise*, the crowd frequently joining in the chorus, and as the President gains his box, the cannon peals again. The Minister of War, if he chances to be a military man, mounts his horse and takes his place beside the Governor of Paris. The troops have taken up their final positions; the Minister of War and the Governor of Paris ride down the line, attended by a brilliant staff, including generals of division and brigade, heads of battalions, etc. This preliminary review terminated, the Minister of War comes back with the Governor to resume their stand in front of the presidential box. The troops hitherto drawn up in order of battle prepare for the march-past. First comes the infantry, with the military school of St Cyr at its head; they defile by companies at a quick pace, and salute the flag. The cavalry follows by squadrons, the artillery by batteries. This is the great moment: the dust, rising in clouds, hangs over the great plain like a pall, whose folds are lighted by an occasional glint of steel. The artillery horses are lost to sight; one sees only a kind of stormy sea, out of which the light flashes at intervals on the white haunch of a horse or an officer's sabre. An army of 26,000 men thus passes before the presidential stand, to resume its position facing the Minister of War, but in wheeling the cavalry has been brought to the front ready to charge directly down upon the spectators' stand.

The entire mass, consisting of three brigades of cavalry, sets itself in motion, quickens its pace to a trot, then breaks into a thundering charge. The effect is thrilling, and even terrifying, to those spectators on the stand to

## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

whom the movement is a novel one. What can stop this formidable body? It draws nearer and nearer, when suddenly, at a distance of a hundred paces, the officers raise their sabres, and the horses come to a simultaneous halt with magnificent precision. This admirable manœuvre arouses general enthusiasm; all break forth into applause, and the air resounds with cries of "Long live the Army! Long live the Republic! Long live the President!" All is over! The President re-enters his landau and leaves the field, preceded and followed by a squadron of cuirassiers and Republican Guards on horseback, who disperse the multitudes and open a way for the official carriages. The crowd streams back towards Paris; the soldiers then take up their line of march for their respective barracks. The cuirassiers and dragoons defile towards Versailles, and the Republican Guard re-enters Paris.

On the morrow an order of the day is read to the troops, in which the President congratulates the Generals on their good organization, and the soldiers on their fine bearing. . . . This seems, therefore, an appropriate moment to inform the reader what constitutes that great system known as the military government of Paris.

The troops stationed in and around Paris belong to various Army Corps—to wit, the Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Ninth, and Tenth Corps, detailed as follows: The 120th and 128th Infantry of the Second Corps are at St Denis; the 119th Regiment of the Third Corps at Courbevoie. Of the Sixth Division, the 24th Regiment is at Nouvelle France, the 28th in the barracks of the Rue de la Pépinière and the bastions of the fortifications, the

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.

129th at Courbevoie and Mont Valérien. A battalion of the line belonging to the Sixth Division of the Third Corps is crowded into the bastions; the 103rd and 104th Regiments in the various barracks of St Cloud, the Rue de Babylone, the École Militaire, and the forts.

The Colonial Army Corps sends to Paris the 21st and 23rd Regiments of Infantry, which are lodged in the bastions and fort of Ivry. The corps-of-occupation of Tunis contributes its 1st and 4th Zouaves.

To these bodies of infantry must be added the Second Brigade of the First Cavalry Division, the 1st and 2nd Squadron quartered at the École Militaire; of the Fifth Brigade, the 27th Dragoons quartered at Versailles, the 23rd at Vincennes, the 11th Cuirassiers at St Germain, and the 12th at Rambouillet.

Of the artillery, the Third Brigade details the 11th and 23rd Regiments, the Nineteenth Brigade sends the 12th Regiment, all quartered at Versailles and Vincennes. The 1st and 3rd Regiments of Engineers are also at Versailles. Such, in its general lines, is the organization of troops which is known as the garrison of Paris, although many of these regiments are actually quartered at Versailles, Fontainebleau, Rambouillet, Vincennes, and St Denis. The cavalry, of which Paris disposes for current service, is drawn from the cuirassiers and dragoons of the École Militaire, or else from the two legions of the Republican Guards and gendarmerie, which are, properly speaking, police corps, as is also the fire brigade.

These special corps are the most familiar of all to the eyes of Parisians. The Municipal Guards are to be found

## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

at the entrance of all theatres and halls where public performances are given. They belong to a picked body, known as the Republican Guards, whose fine band is the delight of promenaders in the Tuileries and Luxembourg Gardens, and at the Parc Monceau. The fire brigade is a branch of the service, highly esteemed and much fêted in Paris. This is doubtless owing to the fact of their appearance wherever a conflagration, inundation, or any serious accident takes place. Their organization has been modelled of late years on that of London. Horses are constantly kept standing ready in their stalls, with their harnesses hanging above their heads, attached at one end to the ceiling, and at the other to the shafts of the various cars which convey the steam fire-engines and hook and ladder companies, as well as the firemen, to the scene of disaster. This service is, however, being rapidly superseded by automobiles. On the breaking out of a fire, it is only necessary to smash the glass of a signal-box, such as is to be found in every quarter of Paris; within is a telephone, by means of which the street and number of the building on fire can be indicated, and aid summoned. Instantly the firemen are on their cars, sounding the alarm trumpet to clear the way, and hastening to the rescue.

There is no exploit which these brave men do not accomplish before the eyes of the population of Paris. They rush to the assault of blazing buildings; they rescue women and children paralyzed with terror, and aged people surprised in their sleep. With a sure hand they direct streams of water upon the conflagration, thus arresting the progress of the most terrible of the elements.

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.

Nothing daunts the firemen—neither roaring flames, stifling smoke, nor crumbling walls—so long as there are lives and property to be saved. And how often their own lives are sacrificed to their devotion to duty, and to their ardour in rescuing strangers from a terrible death! How often these heroes have been put to the proof in terrible conflagrations! Who does not recall the appalling fire which destroyed the Opéra Comique, when so many unfortunate spectators met their death, while hundreds more were saved by the exertions of the firemen who hastened to the scene from every quarter of Paris? These days of disasters are their great days; and when they perish, the same honours are paid to them as to those they attempted to save.

The entrenchments of Paris include the old girdle of antiquated forts now used as barracks, but the batteries which would be brought into active use in case of war are concealed with the utmost care. The old forts would be good for nothing in actual warfare but to attract the enemies' fire.

The fortifications of Paris surround the city with a continuous wall, broken only by gates closed with iron gratings, and guarded by the functionaries of the *octroi*. Will they ever come into use again? Who can say? It is certain that they would offer but a feeble resistance to modern artillery, though they may constitute a sort of moral guarantee. They are also full of memories for the old Parisian, for here the bourgeois and the working man fraternized as they mounted guard together in 1870. Now they furnish a peaceful resort for the citizens



ESPLANADE DES INVALIDES





## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

who come here on Sundays to picnic with their families; football clubs find convenient grounds here, while in the moat near Vaugirard a large drum-and-fife school is held in the open air.

The troops in entrenched camps are those we have spoken of above, and we have seen them in their barracks, which comprise the great École Militaire, occupying one side of the old Champs de Mars, which is now turned into a square, upon which stands the Eiffel Tower; the barracks of Prince Eugène or Château d'Eau; the Place de la République; the Napoleon or Lobau Barracks behind the Hotel de Ville, which were the scene of frightful fusillades after the fall of the commune; the Dupleix, Port Royal, and Pépinière Barracks, etc.—huge buildings where the soldiers are closely packed in ordinary wards.

The Invalides are also a kind of barracks for the benefit of wounded veterans. This institution dates from the reign of Louis XIV.

After these thirty years of peace there are but few pensioners remaining there; nevertheless, the veteran of the Invalides will continue to survive in the popular imagination, clad in his long blue cloak, with an old-fashioned visored cap and a wooden leg. All branches of the military government of Paris have been quartered at the Invalides at one time or another.

The training-camp most familiar to Parisians is that of Issy, which replaced the Champ de Mars after the Exhibition of 1889. There the soldiers drill daily, and monthly reviews are held there; it is also from this camp

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.

that the Farman aeroplane accomplished its first trip of 7,500 metres, with two tacks.

Other training-camps are to be found at Bagatelle, at Longchamp (July 14), at Satory, and, finally, in the Polygone (ordnance-yard) at Vincennes, where all the artillery-firing takes place, and where the Joinville Gymnastic School is established for the practice of those exercises which are assuming more and more importance in the training of the soldier. The Joinville School practises principally the Swedish method, which is tending to supersede the Hanoverian. Many teachers of gymnastics are trained at this school.

The Parisian soldier's bread is baked at the army bakehouse on the Quai Debilly, but all his other food is bought directly from the provision-dealers. Certain regiments do their marketing together at the Halles Centrales, and succeed in providing amply and satisfactorily for themselves on their regular allowance.

The bakeries of the Quai Debilly furnish more than 100,000 rations of bread per day, and the mills can grind 70,000 rations. The storehouses contain 58,000 quintals of wheat, while the flour-magazines suffice for 400,000 rations, or for a forty days' supply. It is easy to imagine what an immense staff this establishment employs. This bakehouse has three annexes—at Mt Valérien, St Denis, and Bicêtre.

The reserve magazines hold 5,000 quintals of provisions of all kinds, suitable for a campaign, and the refrigerating-rooms will contain the carcasses of 200,000 head of cattle.

## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

It is not sufficient, however, to provide quarters for the soldier, to drill and feed him ; he must also be cared for in illness, and for this purpose hospitals are required. The oldest and best known of these military hospitals is the Val de Grâce, founded by Anne of Austria on the occasion of the birth of Louis XIV. It is conducted on the same system as other military hospitals, but there is also connected with it a practical school for medical doctors, and for chemists who graduate from the École de Santé Militaire at Lyons with the degree of Adjutant-Physician of the second class. The sick are under the care of military nurses, and 11,000 patients can be cared for in case of need.

The importance of the war-machine, with all its pomp and paraphernalia, has declined in France since the disasters of 1870. We may wonder at such an anomaly when the strength of the army has been increased nearly tenfold by the establishment of compulsory service, but reflection will supply us with an explanation. The army is no longer that brilliant and unique institution whose object was to furnish the nation with the triumphant joys of conquest. All the citizens, including the upper as well as the lower classes, form part of the army as now constituted. The members of the higher bourgeoisie and of what remains of the aristocracy had been accustomed to enter the army only with the rank of superior officers; until recently, therefore, it was only a small minority who took up arms as a profession. But when obligatory service became universal, the sons of merchants, bankers, and manufac-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.

turers, as well as young doctors and Bachelors of Arts, were constrained to make acquaintance with barrack-room life. Henceforth the institution appeared to them in a less brilliant light, and war ceased to be the heroic preoccupation of the people.

Moreover, it must be admitted that the war of 1870 had opened the eyes of the French to the danger of confiding the destinies of a nation to the force of arms alone. Growing commerce and industry, in a country where the population does not increase greatly, soon occupied all minds. It had become the nation's newly-awakened ideal to acquire the respect of the world by great scientific, literary, artistic, and industrial creations; henceforth the glory of arms took a secondary place. The army was no longer regarded as an instrument of conquest, but merely of defence; Frenchmen therefore wished it to be great in numbers and strength, without aspiring to put it to active use so long as peace remained possible.

The officer, on his side, had ceased to be a brilliant cavalier attached to a splendid Court; he had become instead the modest servant of the nation. Other things were now required of him besides a fine figure, courage, and distinguished manners: he was obliged to add effectiveness to appearance, to devote himself to serious study, and to accept cheerfully the rough life of provincial garrisons. Officers, however, continued to be drawn from the class of well-to-do citizens, or from the old aristocratic society. The man of the people who attains to the superior grades is still an exception, since money is required to become a good officer. Whether a



PONT DE L'ALMA



## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

man is to graduate from the Polytechnic in the élite corps of the artillery or engineers, or from St Cyr in the cavalry or infantry, the preliminary studies require too much time for the working man's son to undertake them. In addition to St Cyr and the military Prytanæum, there exists a higher school of war whose seat is the Ecole Militaire of Paris. Only Captains are admitted there, who, on graduation, are appointed to the general staff with brevet rank, and from that day forth can aspire to a career in the highest ranks of the service.

The nation, moreover, is experiencing a certain weariness of its past, too heavily laden with glory and defeat. Under Louis XIV, France was incessantly engaged in European wars; these being, however, but slight skirmishes compared with the wars into which the Revolution was about to plunge her. All Europe then hurled itself upon France; she held her own courageously and victoriously, with levies hastily raised and Generals of twenty, and she succeeded only too well. The entire nation was kindled, and to the wars of defence succeeded the wars of conquest. Out of twenty Generals of apparently equal genius, the French elected Napoleon Bonaparte as their chief, and under his lead entered upon those famous battles of the Empire which, while gratifying the national pride, exhausted the country and drained her of her best blood.

At this dazzling period Paris became possessed at last of a military régime which could satisfy its taste for martial colour, its craving for brilliant uniforms, war-trumpets, and magnificent parades. At the moment when



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.

the little Corporal was leading his triumphant armies back to Paris from Italy and Spain, it was a far cry indeed from the days when the soldiers of the Revolution had marched away in tatters, barefooted or in sabots, and had re-entered Paris penniless, blackened with powder and stained with blood. The present armies had been equipped by their young Emperor with glittering uniforms rich in gold braid, with crimson epaulettes, embroidered and befrogged pelisses, white leather breeches and plumed hats. The eagles were magnificent. The people applauded with enthusiasm these splendidly-clad Generals, blazing with jewels, when suddenly, in the midst of his glittering staff, there rode by a little man on a white horse, clad in a shabby grey overcoat : it was the Emperor.

It must be admitted that at this period the army had triumphed over the civil power. It was Napoleon's grenadiers who had turned out the Council of Ancients on the eighteenth Brumaire. Soldiers were therefore in the ascendant, and rose to extraordinary heights of fortune. A son of the people like Bernadotte became King of Sweden ; all the great Generals risen from the lower ranks of society, or from the smaller bourgeoisie, acquired the titles of Duke or Prince, with splendid appanages.

Let us add that the descendants of these Dukes and Princes of the Empire still enjoy, under the Third Republic, the titles and estates which Napoleon created for them. It may be said, indeed, that the entire military organization of France at the present day is an outcome of the reforms introduced by the Revolution and by



PONT SAINT-DENIS



## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

Napoleon. We no longer, indeed, see Generals of twenty in command, but the régime of field-officers, the general administration, the commissariat, the formation of the staff, and rules of precedence, all date from the Empire.

The uniforms of the army have had a diversified career, and have suffered continual transformations under the various Governments which have succeeded each other in France since 1815. There is no longer any vestige of the grenadiers' bearskin, and the leather apron of the sappers has also vanished. Military costume tends to become more simple, the only survivals of past splendour being the casques and breastplates of the dragoons and cuirassiers; while the picturesque uniforms of the zouaves and spahis have originated from our contact with the Arabs.

The general tendency is to give to all the uniforms a neutral tint resembling the colour of the ground on which the soldiers manœuvre in time of war; this is that khaki colour adopted by England during the Transvaal Campaign.

It is certain that the light blue coat and bright red trousers of our line regiments do not easily permit them to escape the enemy's fire. Our dragoons and cuirassiers also continue to wear these scarlet trousers. The Minister of War, General André, has tried to originate a new uniform for the infantry, resembling that of the American rough-riders or of the Boer regulars. This innovation was very ill-received by the Parisian public when introduced to them on the occasion of a great review. The Government accordingly renounced the project for the time

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.]

being, but is undoubtedly preparing another costume in which all that is left of the too-brilliant colour of the past, which serves to recall the heroic days of the Napoleonic epic, will have disappeared for ever.

After Waterloo, the nation, grown weary of war, asked nothing better than to see her military forces reduced. Under the Restoration the record of the army was not a brilliant one; for the Battle of Navarino served only to revive the prestige of the navy, and the capture of Algiers by Bourmont at the head of 39,000 men was but a trifling skirmish compared with the great battles of the Empire. Under Louis Philippe the army resumed its lustre, although France showed in general a pacific spirit. Nevertheless, the Dutch were repulsed, and the citadel of Antwerp taken, while the conquest of Algeria was completed. The army distinguished itself at this period by one extraordinary feat of arms, in which a body of 120 men, shut up in a small fort at Mazagran, resisted for four days the assaults of a force of thousands of Arabs. But that which contributed most effectually to the reorganization of the army was the threatening attitude of Europe after the Treaty of London, when Louis Philippe accepted resolutely the isolated position forced upon him, and refused to be driven into a war. Meanwhile he reorganized his forces, fortified Paris, and increased the efficiency of the army.

This pacific Government being overthrown, the Republic took its place, and the army merely intervened in civil strife. But in a short time the Second Empire replaced the Second Republic, and although Napoleon



GARE D'ORLÉANS : PONT SOLFÉRINO



## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

III formulated the programme of his reign in the words: "The Empire is peace," he nevertheless plunged France into frequent and formidable wars. The army, having been the instrument which brought about the *coup d'état*, naturally became the chief object of solicitude with the new Government. It resumed its brilliant aspect, and the people began to cherish the Imperial army once more as recalling the great victories of the uncle of the Emperor.

The Crimean War was followed by the war in Syria, the war in China, and, finally, by the Prussian War in 1870. The army had marched from victory to victory for twenty years amid general acclamation, when this irreparable calamity overtook it. All the commanding officers, selected through favouritism, had shown themselves thoroughly incapable, and the inexorable Germans were masters of Paris.

The lustre of the army was sadly tarnished by this defeat. The officers were bitterly reproached for too much caracoling at reviews and dancing at Court, too much time wasted in frivolity and dissipation ; and henceforth a modest existence of labour and abnegation was imposed upon them. The bourgeoisie and the people, who were now united in the same barrack-life, became united also in a common denunciation of former errors.

Some progress had been made in the direction of reform, and army affairs were believed to be in a more hopeful condition, when the too-famous Dreyfus affair again made it evident to all that the highest places in the service were filled exclusively by the Pleiad of Generals be-



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.

queathed us by the Second Empire. New efforts at reform were then inaugurated, and to-day there is some appearance of our possessing a homogeneous army, well commanded, and loyally devoted to the Government of the Republic.

If nations are judged in heaven like individuals, France should merit recognition above for her noble attitude since 1870. She has sincerely desired peace ; she has accepted the existence of an army designed solely to defend her against invasion ; she has contented herself with the most modest rôle from a war-like point of view ; and, in spite of the provocations of the turbulent and incoherent masses and of firebrand party orators, she has acknowledged the fact that the greatness of a country does not depend on the abasement of her neighbours, but solely upon her own development. To-day the Parisian who is present at a review of the Paris garrison sees with pleasure the fine bearing of these regiments, but no longer looks forward to beholding them engaged in the conquest of Europe. He desires peace for others as well as for himself, while adopting the famous dictum, "*Si vis pacem, para bellum.*"

The Ministry of War, established in its vast quarters at the corner of the Boulevard St Germain and the Rue St Dominique, is the centre for all branches of the service. General Picquart, officer of the Legion of Honour and General of Division, occupies the post of Minister of War. General Picquart is an essentially Parisian personality. He was only a Colonel at the time the Dreyfus case was reopened, through the instrumentality of



CAUMARTIN STATION OF THE "MÉTROPOLITAIN"



## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

M. Scheurer Kestner, the President of the Senate. Colonel Picquart ventured to take the part of the unfortunate Dreyfus against Esterhazy, thus drawing down upon himself the animosity of the Intelligence Department of the War Office, to which he belonged. This department, having at its head a Colonel named Henry, infected with its hostile feelings the General Staff, in the person of the Chief of Staff and his first aide. A former Minister of War having joined this alliance, the luckless Picquart soon found himself in a bad plight. Accused of having betrayed to the public secrets relating to the national defence, and, moreover, of having forged a telegram, he was thrown into the prison of Cherchi Midi. He had been there for a long time when Colonel Henry confessed himself guilty of the alleged forgery. Picquart was accordingly liberated, and while the famous "affair" continued to agitate the country, the disgraced Colonel became a man of consequence, a celebrity to be met with in all the leading salons of Paris. He also devoted himself at this time to the study of Herbert Spencer, and we possess from his pen several philosophical treatises of peculiar interest. Meanwhile the partisans of Dreyfus had triumphed; Picquart was appointed an officer of the Legion of Honour, and reinstated in the army with the rank of General. Singularly enough, however, when the new General was appointed Minister of War, he failed to restore the unhappy Dreyfus to the grade he would have attained if he had not been sent to Devil's Island.

General Picquart is to-day the supreme head of the army; he has created an appointment of Under-Secre-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.]

taryship of War, which has been conferred upon a civilian, M. Henri Chéron, deputy from Calvados. These two men are entrusted with the entire administration of the army. They present the War Budget to the Chamber of Deputies and Senate, defend its articles, and reply to the questions addressed to them by members of both Houses. Questions are numerous ; numerous, also, the accusations brought against certain officers, of neglecting their duty, and of peculation—charges which agitate the Parisian public from time to time. General Picquart's rôle is to reply with a smile that all is well, and to wind up his speech with a patriotic couplet—a course which he never fails to adopt.

The Budget of the War Office is divided into two sections—the first relating to the general administration, the second to extraordinary expenditure. The general War Budget exceeds the sum of seven hundred millions of francs, and is rapidly increasing to a thousand million.

To aid the Minister in those administrative functions which relate directly to preparation for war, there has been formed a General Army Staff. The chief of this Staff at present is General Brun, former Commandant of the École Supérieure de Guerre, and Commander of the Legion of Honour. It is under the direction of this skilful and accomplished officer that all plans for the mobilization and concentration of troops have been drawn up.

The Minister of War presides over the Superior Council of War, in which care has been taken to include all the distinguished Generals on the retired list, whose experience may serve to assist the Minister.

## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

The work of the Ministry is carried on in four offices, in which civilians are employed. These offices come under the following heads: (1) Organization and mobilization; (2) military operations and general instructions for the army; (3) foreign intelligence; (4) railroads and commissariat.

The military government of Paris, of which we have spoken in connection with the review of July 14, is included in the department of the Minister of War. The Governor of Paris, General Dalstein, Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, is a General of Division and former Commandant of the Sixth Army Corps.

He co-operated with General Picquart in the organization of the national defence. He has a staff under his orders, and is also in permanent communication with the group of Generals whose army corps are stationed in the environs of Paris, or who command divisions, brigades of which send detachments to the capital. Added to these is the group of brilliant officers who surround the Minister of War—Generals Dubois, Oudard, Rogue, and Pauline—directors respectively of the cavalry, artillery, engineers corps, and infantry, together with General Brun and his three Chiefs of Staff, Generals Manoury, Zimer, and Berthaut. There are also the Generals presiding over the various army committees and the members of the Superior Council of War.

These officers are all to be seen riding in the morning in the Bois de Boulogne. In the evening they assemble at the various salons, where their social relations draw them; they are also to be found at the leading clubs of

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.

Paris, and especially at the Cercle Militaire on the Avenue de l'Opéra, which is a club devoted alike to play and conversation. Whenever a state function, such as a reception by the President, brings the official world together at the Elysée, they are sure to be present in full uniform, glittering with orders and decorations. Those who are fortunate enough to have served in a recent campaign will be found talking it over with their comrades; the rest gather in groups to discuss possible future operations, new tactics, or the latest thing in strategy. These officers all love their profession, which keeps them hale and hearty to an advanced age, and they enter with keen interest into all measures for ameliorating the lot of the common soldier. It is not their fault, after all, that there are no more wars, and that their trade seems to have become mere matter of routine. The officers of the German army are in a still worse plight, for the French General can at least set his hopes on some possible colonial war, such as that of Tonquin or Tunis, or, more recently, that of Morocco; while the German, who has no colonies, has nothing for it but to fold his arms.

After the lapse of a century the minds of our Generals are still under the spell of Napoleon's military genius, and it is from him that they continue to draw their inspiration.

Immediately after the war of 1870, they all applied themselves with ardour to the study of German military science, in the hope of finding out something new in the way of tactics. They found nothing new, only a system of operations rationally conducted by wise and prudent

## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

Generals, and a well-informed and studious administration. The defeats of the French army then appeared to them in their true light, as due, above all, to the incapacity and carelessness of the commanding officers. The art of winning battles, they argued, cannot be practised now, any more than in Napoleon's time, with incompetent Generals, a bad commissariat, and undisciplined troops, yet Napoleon's system continues good. A rapid offensive attack, planned with foresight and well led, will succeed now, as infallibly as in the past, under a skilful leader who can carry his soldiers along with him. Such is the general opinion. A few prudent Generals, however, acknowledge that our great victories have been mostly fruitless, owing to the fact that mere *élan* does not suffice. It may take the enemy by surprise, but he recovers himself in the end and crushes you. It is a safer policy to distrust too-brilliant successes; to aim at a plan of concentration full of resistance, which shall harass the enemy; to retreat slowly, if it be inevitable, but in such a manner that each backward movement shall cost the enemy so dear that he will have cause to remember it; finally, to draw him into a succession of fruitless combats which shall finally discourage any renewal of hostilities.

This latter view, be it understood, is not the popular one; it is not in accordance with the French character, which is ardent, quick, and impetuous, dreaming always of heroic, war-like achievements and winged victories.

We have seen how the citizen of Paris participates in the great army celebrations as a spectator; he takes part in them also as an actor, for he too is a soldier. From



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. viii.]

the age of twenty, the young Parisian is called upon to serve under the flag. The day when the recruiting takes place is traditionally the occasion for a prolonged drinking-bout. Formerly, before compulsory service was established for all, the drawing for the conscription decided a man's whole future existence. He was forced to abandon his trade at the age of twenty, and give seven years of his life to military service. After the war of 1870, this service was reduced to five years, then to three; finally, quite recently, it has been further reduced to two years. Under the Second Empire, the young man in easy circumstances who drew an unlucky number in the conscription bought a substitute, so that the common soldiers were all drawn from the people. To-day, with compulsory service for all, this is no longer possible, and the terrible formality of drawing by lot has no longer the same consequences as of old. Nevertheless, as, until quite recently, the first drawing of numbers decided which soldiers should be attached to the marine corps for a four years' service and which should be sent to the colonies, there were still advantages in drawing a high number.

On the momentous day of drawing for the conscription the young men of the humbler class flock to the Hotel de Ville, attended by their relations and friends, their caps adorned with the tricoloured cockade, their buttonholes with streamers of ribbon. After the lots are drawn, they further decorate their caps with large labels, upon which their respective numbers are printed, and, thus decked out, they set forth on the obligatory tour of the wine-shops. They may also be seen traversing the



WINGED VICTORY AND STAIRCASE OF THE LOUVRE



## CH. viii.] OF MILITARY PARIS

capital in open carriages accompanied by their friends, all singing in vinous accents. Frequently serious disturbances take place, and fights ending in bloodshed. This spectacle is not only far from agreeable, it is absolutely ignoble. Why is it that the population of Paris, which boasts of its refined manners and keen sense of honour and dignity, consents to offer such an exhibition ? Who can say ? It is probably one of those objectionable customs transmitted from one generation to another, like ragging in barracks.

Some writers see in it the vestiges of the orgy of antiquity ; to others it recalls the drunken helot of Sparta ; still others, whose opinion we share, regard it merely as a relic of the time when the recruiting sergeant enticed young men into the taverns in order to induce them to enlist. Whatever its origin, we do not hesitate to class it among those customs "more honoured in the breach than in the observance."

## CHAPTER IX

### Of Paris Finance

Historical Sketch—The Bank of France—"La Haute Banque"—The Rothschilds and Others—Vote on the Budget—Secret Service Funds—The Bourse—Shady Finance—The Great *Crachs*—The Panama Company

**T**HANKS to her geographical position, France is one of the richest countries on the globe. Her aggregate wealth amounts to three hundred thousand million francs, and this she owes almost exclusively to the produce of her soil, for in foreign commerce she is far behind England, Germany, and America. In a country so distinguished for thrift and extensive savings, loan institutions, savings-banks and companies receiving deposits on interest must necessarily be numerous; and as Paris is the clearing-house for all the financial and commercial transactions of the country, it is there that all the great banking-houses and institutions for savings and exchange are situated.

Historically, the birth of the great financial concerns is a humble one. During the feudal era, the barons wrung the revenues of their estates from the serfs by means of contributions, taxes, forced labour, and burdens of every sort, which at that period took the place of savings. The peasant handed over his economies to his feudal lord, in the form of public and private labour. Having no money, he made all payments in produce of the soil, such as wheat, eggs, and milk, and in cattle, sheep, and horses. As soon as he had acquired some skill



PLACE VENDÔME



## CH. ix.] OF PARIS FINANCE

in manual labour, he paid in house-building and the making of rude furniture. Finally, when money came into circulation throughout the kingdom, he began to pay in coin. Henceforth the baron became a financier, a banker, but not an economist. His expenditure on pleasures and luxuries soon placed him in the power of those shrewder than himself. He then began to borrow upon his future revenues, and to pledge himself and his lands in order to dispose at once of several years' income. Thus, by degrees, the great money-lenders enriched themselves, even the King being reduced to borrowing of them. It was they who collected the revenues of the kingdom, advancing immediate cash, and reimbursing themselves out of the rents.

This system flourished while the kingdom was developing and wealth increasing rapidly. The farmers of taxes increased at the same time in numbers and in riches. Thanks to them, Louis XIV could command the money required for his wars, Louvois for his canals and roads, Colbert for his fortifications. But on the outbreak of the Revolution the people decided to collect their own rents, through the intermediary of zealous functionaries bearing but a remote resemblance to the farmers of taxes. They also reaped a commission on the taxes they collected, but not on the same exorbitant scale.

The State, however, was not yet fully its own master. In the course of the nineteenth century the Government was often reduced to the same plight as the Kings of the old régime. In starting great national undertakings, it was not always easy to realize the amount re-

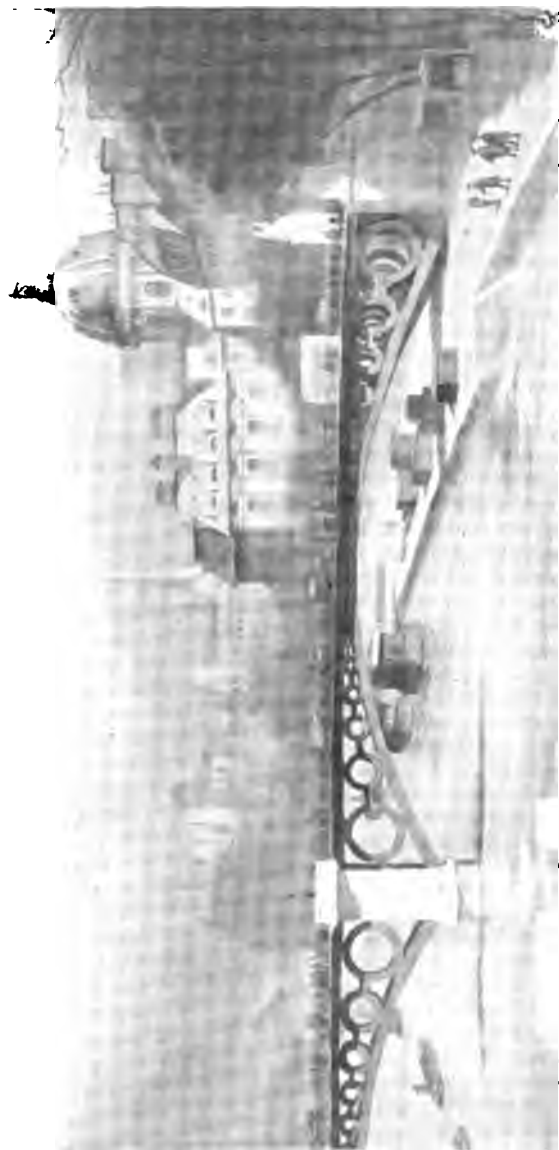


## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ix.

quired by immediate increase of taxation. It was therefore necessary to borrow from the great banks controlled by men of wealth, like the Lafittes, Rothschilds, and Pereires. These bankers would readily advance sixty millions to the State on condition of being authorized to issue one hundred millions in bonds to be sold to the public. But as the nation gradually became aware of its resources, it was able by degrees to drive a better bargain, until it reached the point of forfeiting only two or three francs in the hundred—in other words, of realizing nearly the total amount of its loan.

While the State was thus emancipating itself from dependence on the farmers of taxes and the great banking-houses, private citizens were pursuing the same course. They gradually learned to substitute the banker for the usurer, and credit for payment in kind, until they at last reached the point of carrying on commerce by simple agreements on paper, variously known as letters of exchange, cheques, etc. Henceforth the merchant borrowed for three or six months, at a low rate of interest, the sums required for conducting his business, and could await his annual returns without fear of seeing them entirely absorbed by the interest on borrowed money.

The Bank of France is, in a measure, an epitome of the financial organization of the country. It is almost a Government administration, since it issues a genuine coinage of its own, having a regular circulation in 100, 500, and 1,000 franc notes. It is also required to have a metallic reserve equivalent to the notes thus issued ;



EASTWARD VIEW FROM PONT ROYAL



## CH. ix.] OF PARIS FINANCE

and, in fact, the Bank of France possesses more gold, coined and in bullion, than any other in the world.

It often comes to pass that the banks of the great European States or of the United States appeal to its aid for immediate payments in times of crisis. That it has the means of assisting them is explained by the fact that the wealth of France is derived almost exclusively from its soil, its industries, and its home commerce. Money, not being invested in other countries, stagnates, and a plethora of coin is the result.

What is here stated in regard to the Bank of France is equally true of other banks and institutions of credit throughout the country, such as the Société Générale, the Crédit Lyonnais, the Rothschild Bank, etc. These are all overflowing with hoarded capital in gold coin and bullion. Most of these banks, not content with receiving money on current account, are also in the habit of letting safes in which investors can store their securities. The State itself opens a channel for this stream of gold. It receives the savings of the poor in sums not exceeding 1,500 francs, and millions are thus poured into its treasury.

La Haute Banque is a term including all the great contemporary financiers known to Paris.

First in order come the Rothschilds, who form a dynasty. The chief origin of their fortune was the Italian loan under the First Empire. Their latest operations were the Russian loan and the first Japanese loan in France. Alphonse, the founder of the bank, was succeeded by Gustave, born in 1829, and Edmond, born

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ix.

in 1849. The actual head of the house, Edmond, is in partnership with Gustave and with Édouard, the son of Alphonse. The Rothschilds started the Chemin de Fer du Nord in France. They are virtual owners of the Tarragona and Lombard railroads, and control great petroleum works at Baku, as well as numerous shares in Rio Tinto and De Beers.

The amount of Alphonse de Rothschild's fortune, as shown by the income-tax records, reached fourteen hundred millions of francs. This fortune is now divided into three parts. Gustave is reported to be a great speculator, and it is currently believed that he has diminished rather than increased his portion. Edmond, the wealthiest of the family, has been a great promoter of electrical enterprises in France. He is a man attached to Jewish traditions, and is married to a Frankfort Rothschild, who brought him a dowry of three millions; while Gustave, on the other hand, married a dowerless Mademoiselle Anspach. Edmond and Gustave are both members of the Jockey Club, where they indulge in games of whist, bridge, and Japanese bézique. Édouard, the son of Alphonse, is a member of the Épatant, where he plays baccarat. He also owns a racing stud, and his horse Sans Souci was winner of the Grand Prix in 1907.

All the Rothschilds are great collectors. One of them, Baron Henri, son of James, is an active philanthropist, well known to the Parisian world. Let us add that the Rothschilds formerly married only Rothschilds, and even at the present day continue to form only Jewish

## CH. ix.] OF PARIS FINANCE

alliances. We know of but one exception, the daughter of Baron Salomon, who married M. Van Zuylen.

M. Henri Bamberger, who has attained to the advanced age of eighty, still attends actively to the affairs of the Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas. He is an ardent collector of antiques. He adores Paris, and never fails to attend the opera and the Français, where he is a box-holder.

Edgard Stein, one of the founders of the Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas, married a Mademoiselle Fould. He is also a collector and a member of the Épatant. One of his daughters married Count d'Aramont. He is possessed of a large private fortune.

The Pereires are a dynasty like the Rothschilds, but a fallen dynasty. They still have great investments, however—Eugène in the Compagnie Transatlantique, Gustave in the railroads of Northern Spain. Isaac Pereire and his brother Emile were the founders of the house. Together they established the Crédit Immobilier. The St Simonian opinions which they early professed were regarded as a strange novelty at that period.

Count Isaac de Camando, who is of Turkish origin, is president of the gas company. He is the owner of a magnificent collection of pictures, especially pastels, which it is rumoured that he intends to bequeath to the Louvre. He is a great musical amateur and the composer of an opera, *The Clown*, which has been performed at the Théâtre Nouveau. He is also a shareholder in the opera.

Baron Hottinguer is a descendant of one of the

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ix.

founders of the Bank of France. His bank deals in Government bonds, especially in those of Russia. He, too, belongs to the Jockey Club.

Baron Mallet is a speculator and bill-discounter ; a member, also, of the Jockey Club, and a distinctly Parisian type.

We must mention, also, Monsieur Vernes and the Baron de Neuflize. The latter owns a discounting bank.

It may be of interest to observe that, while MM. Hottinguer, Vernes, Mallet, and Neuflize represent the leading Protestant banking interests, the others above mentioned represent the Jewish contingent.

To this list may be added the name of Pillet Will, a firm of English bankers settled in France since the Restoration, and the Ephrussi, bankers of Russian origin.

How does the French Government conduct its financial administration and control the enormous receipts and expenditures required by the constantly increasing demands of the public business ?

In theory, the sovereignty emanating from the people, it is the senators and deputies who draw up and vote the Budget. But since it is virtually impossible that this office should be performed by a body of over a thousand persons, it is actually the Minister of Finance who draws up the Budget. For this purpose he obtains from his colleagues in the Ministry a summary of their resources and requirements. This constitutes the particular Budget of each Ministry. Among these Ministries there are several which contribute nothing, such as the Department of Foreign Affairs, that of Justice and of the In-

## CH. ix.] OF PARIS FINANCE

terior, the Colonies, Commerce, and Labour. Others bring in receipts—as, for instance, the Ministry of Public Works, thanks to the postal, telegraph, and telephone services, and that of Public Instruction, by its examination and matriculation fees.

The Minister of Finance sums up all this; when he has drawn up his report, he submits it to the Committee on the Budget, made up of members of the legislative body. There it is exposed to a critical examination, which is severe, however, only in semblance. It is the senators and deputies who sift the Budget, so to speak; this is the most onerous duty performed by these two bodies, and the most ungrateful. All the great moneyed interests are involved in this transaction; there are privileges to be defended, pensions to be maintained. The Paris press also stirs up an agitation which is incomprehensible to the general public; an outcry is raised over the smallest details. The Opposition newspapers declaim against the Government policy, and compare the administration of the great railway companies with that of the State lines, proving by incontestable statistics the inferiority of the latter. They alternately attack and defend the stockbrokers' board and denounce the tobacco monopoly. Then the Conservative and Government organs take up the cry, and pour forth their grievances. The State, they aver, is laden with an immense debt; the finances are in a pitiable condition; the country is on the verge of bankruptcy. These alarming reports impress the public. They are as familiar to their ears as are the grievances of their cooks, but they are moved nevertheless. A



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ix.

little more, and all the lesser functionaries would offer to surrender a portion of their salary in behalf of so impoverished an exchequer! Then all grows calm again, and it is suddenly announced that the deputies have voted themselves an increase of salary at the rate of 6,000 francs per head, thus reducing the Budget, already so badly off, by over three millions of francs.

Next the Socialist deputies make a furious attack on the Budget in the Chambers, declaring that they shall refuse to vote for such and such articles ; raising a cry of horror over the expenditures, and demanding the instant removal of all duties. This is in December. Thereupon the entire Government press breaks forth in recriminations. The Budget, they assert, will never be voted by January 1—a delay which will be most prejudicial to the financial interests of the country. What is the Minister to do ? Where is he to find the necessary resources ?

All at once the Opposition press and the Socialist deputies take alarm, or feign alarm, over this prospect, all being at bottom perfectly content to vote the Budget, after a proper display of opposition. Both parties hedge, to use the consecrated expression, and the Minister of Finance bears off his immense *dossier*, provided with the votes of both Chambers, which are required to give it legality.

The Minister of Finance, drawing a long sigh of relief, leaves to his officials the task of applying the new Budget. If the Chambers have voted a loan, he summons the heads of the great banking-houses, and issues the loan



CORNER OF RUE DES HAUDRIETTES AND RUE DES ARCHIVES



## CH. ix.] OF PARIS FINANCE

through their instrumentality. Immediately Paris is transformed. It would seem at first sight as if this loan would sadden the French citizen, who sees the National Debt augmented thereby; but the effect is quite the reverse. The small fund-holder sees in it only an opportunity for investing his savings profitably; the speculator plans a great stroke; all make haste to subscribe at the *Crédit Lyonnais*, at *Rothschilds'*, or at the various post-offices.

By daybreak there is a long line, in popular parlance a "queue," drawn up at the door of these establishments. Sometimes, even, it is formed overnight. It consists mostly of representatives of the humbler classes, such as butchers, grocers, bakers, employés, cooks and waiters; there are also some working men and rent-payers, and a sprinkling of vagabonds, but these latter are only keeping places in the line, in order to sell them, for two or three francs, to late-comers.

In this way the loan is subscribed, not once merely, but a dozen, a score of times over. The State asks for five millions; it is offered five thousand millions, and can only accept a small percentage of the subscriptions offered.

Distant indeed are those terrible days when the ancient monarchy lived perpetually under the shadow of financial ruin; far distant the time when Louis XIV sold his jewels and plate to pay his army in Flanders, when Louis XV trafficked upon the famine of his own subjects, or the still more terrible time when the unfortunate Louis XVI, not finding the necessary funds for the ex-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ix.

penses of the State, entrusted the task to revolutionary Ministers like Necker, and finally found himself driven to summon the States General. It was not that the country was absolutely unable at that period to supply the necessary resources—it furnished them for the wars of the Revolution, and never refused advances to Napoleon I—but it stood in constant dread of absolute ruin. The people required (and still require) from its rulers a clear statement of the financial situation in its general lines.

It has been said, and with justice, that the French people are the best of rate-payers. They pay without a murmur, and accept new taxes, or an increase of the old ones, provided only that these are not sprung upon them without warning, and that there is a semblance of justice, plain-dealing, and honesty in the accounts submitted to them. The French citizen wishes to vote his own taxes, but, this being done, he does not haggle: the money may go where it will. He says to the Government: "You want six or seven hundred millions for the army? Here they are. One hundred millions for public instruction? Take them. But let me know it; let there be no mystery or underhand dealings." And this fear of the underhand and mysterious is such a nightmare with the people that they regard with genuine horror that portion of the Budget known as the Secret Service Fund.

It is with difficulty that a few hundred thousand francs can be raised for the purpose of hiring agents abroad and paying the secret police at home. And what an ado is made over these few hundreds of thousands!

## CH. ix.] OF PARIS FINANCE

"You live upon the secret funds!" cry the journals of the Opposition, addressing the Government organs. "There are secret funds behind that move," declares the popular voice whenever a deputy changes his tactics. If all the money thus gratuitously ascribed to the Secret Service Fund could be collected together, it would far exceed that of the entire Budget.

Before proceeding further, it may be well to inquire what means the State has at its disposal to augment its receipts. We are not speaking of loans, which are for emergencies. There remain, then, the taxes, direct and indirect, rates, customs, and Government monopolies.

Direct taxation comprises an annual land-rent payable to the State, taxes on real estate and personal property, to which must be added the door and window tax and commercial patents. These are the chief resources which the State derives from direct taxation. Indirect taxation includes the duties on sugar, salt, coffee, alcohol, candles, petroleum, playing-cards, raw material, and articles of consumption indispensable for all, for which the consumer pays in proportion to his rate of consumption. To these must be added the stamp and registry tax, and State monopolies, such as matches and tobacco, which are manufactured and sold directly by the Government.

All these burdens fall heavily on the Parisians, but they bear them cheerfully, as well as the still heavier burden of the Patent Office. Nor is this all, for Paris has also its own special Budget, which reaches the sum of half a billion francs. Paris must meet the entire amount of these obligations. The Parisian grumbles, and pays,

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ix.

for, as we have said, he is an excellent rate-payer. When the city issues a loan, he rushes to the brokers, and bids for shares as eagerly as he bids for State bonds. These securities are a safe and profitable investment, and, in spite of being liable to be called in at par, are always worth more than their face-value.

And now, by way of bringing our readers in touch with the vital centre of Paris financial life, we must devote a few words to the Bourse.

The Bourse is the Stock Exchange of Paris. Here are bought and sold all the securities current in the Paris market and many others besides. The rule is that any French or foreign stock can be quoted on the official list, provided a regular call has been made for it, and that it ranks as a good security.

Practically all transactions are carried on by a board of brokers, membership of which body commands a high price, and is transferable only by consent of the board. The brokers at the Bourse take their stand in a large hall, divided by a railing from the public. This is known as the *Corbeille* (stock-brokers' ring), and those brokers entitled to a seat at the Bourse are called the ring, or *Corbeille*. Around this inner sanctum circulate, amid the general public, a throng of financiers, called *coulissiers*. A few years ago more business was carried on in the *coulisse*, or "side-walks," than in the ring, so that it became necessary to pass a law forbidding the *coulissiers* to do any business except through the regular brokers.

The mechanism of the transactions on the Paris



EAST SIDE OF THE BOURSE





## CH. ix.]      OF PARIS FINANCE

Bourse is simple. In a cash sale, the seller engages to deliver, and the buyer to receive, the stock in the course of the day. In time purchases, the seller disposes of the stock under agreement to deliver at a fixed date. This latter transaction always relates, in practice, to fictitious values, and is the equivalent of buying "on a margin." Such combinations are customary in the stock-market all over the world. In Paris the custom is that no broker shall take such an order to buy unless he have in hand assets amounting to not less than 1,500 francs—a sum fixed as covering a possible variation of three points on a transaction of 50,000 francs.

The aspect of the Bourse is highly picturesque, and redolent of the local colour of Paris. In the inner circle, where the "ring" and the *coulisse* are busy taking and transmitting orders, the greatest animation prevails. Under the peristyle giving on the Rue Vivienne hundreds of people come and go, jostling each other in their eagerness, and shouting out orders and bids for stock. The uproar is deafening, rising at times, on days of crisis, to a frenzied height. When would-be purchasers are to be encouraged on the one hand, or a panic is to be created on the other, there is a tumultuous interchange of bids and offers, and two camps are formed, between which the unlucky speculator strives in vain to divine whether the "bulls" or "bears" will carry the day. He consults the "ticker." The news is contradictory. The *coulis-siers* hustle and shout, the bulls endeavouring to dominate the bears, and *vice versâ*. For a brief moment the bears triumph, and it seems as if all were over. Sud-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ix.

denly there is a reaction, and the tide flows back. New figures are quoted, a telegram is announced, and a purchase by Rothschild sends the stock up with a bound. How will it all end? This will be known only at the closing of the Bourse, when the final quotations are posted.

It is a problem for the uninitiated spectator to understand how bids and offers of stock are exchanged. A few eager words pronounced by one gentleman, a hasty note jotted down by another gentleman with a pencil, and the business is settled. The looker-on asks himself what prevents the buyer, in case of loss, from repudiating his purchase or the broker his sale. This, however, never happens. In the first place, the speculators know each other, and when a man calls out "*Je prends!*" everyone notices him. An attempt to back out of a bargain would entail disqualification, and the stock-gambler enjoys the game too well to run the risk of seeing the Bourse closed against him. Moreover, there is a sense of professional honour which forces a man who might repudiate other debts to respect these.

But what is this strange group of interlopers who gather at the foot of the stairway or under the trees near the monument? Strange types indeed! Shabby old men and dowdy old women exchanging securities which have no official currency—the most singular *valeurs*, in fact, some of which may be said to have no value at all. This is called the "Bourse des Pieds humides," and brings us to that realm of shady finance which flourishes so extensively in Paris under varied forms.

## CH. ix.] OF PARIS FINANCE

The proceedings of the shady financier do not vary greatly. He always begins his career by opening a banking-house. He selects for this purpose a conspicuous quarter, rents a stylish suite of rooms, furnishes them luxuriously, and installs behind grated wickets five or six employees of serious appearance, who can be seen by the public, bending over ponderous ledgers and cash-books. One of these wickets is labelled "Cashier," another "Accountant's Office," and a third "Orders on the Bourse," etc.

The victim (*gogo* is the Bourse slang for the man who lets himself be fleeced) is usually from the provinces. Dazzled by this display of opulence, he immediately deposits the five or six thousand francs, which are sufficient, he is told, to insure success on the Bourse. He always makes something at first, then he loses—by mere ill-luck, as he is made to believe. He asks no more, and never sees his five or six thousand francs again. On reflection, it is easy to see what can be made by a clever swindler out of such a business. Give him only one hundred *gogos* at 6,000 francs each, and he will have cleared 600,000, which he can place at interest, thus realizing small profits for his clients and big ones for himself. Let a piece of luck come his way, such as a sudden rise on the metal exchanges, gold-mines, or Russian bonds, and behold him a millionaire! He reimburses his *gogos*, and is transformed from a shady to a genuine financier. But it is usually the opposite that takes place. Having gambled with the money of his victims, he loses instead of winning. He is unable, therefore, to

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ix.

reimburse them, even partially, and some one of them, growing indignant, brings a suit. The court looks into his affairs, and our shady financier is sent to prison.

The most recent affair of this kind was that of a bank in the Rue Auber, near the Opéra. It was a loan society. At a hearing in court, a worthy man who had lost 200,000 francs retailed his misadventures. How could he imagine, he exclaimed, that a house run on such a luxurious scale, with costly furniture and pictures by the great masters, frescoed in a style which must certainly have cost hundreds of thousands of francs, could hide a vulgar swindle? And the director's office, how of that? "All is not gold that glitters," replied the magistrate. Doubtless the tradesmen were not paid, and the masterpieces were not genuine. But with fifty subscribers at 200,000 francs each, the director realized his ten millions, and what may not be done with ten millions? Only this particular swindler had been unlucky, and suspicion had been aroused too soon.

The French money-market, habitually so tranquil, owing to its plethora of savings, has nevertheless experienced, and still experiences periodically, those failures of large concerns, or that sudden depreciation in a group of stocks in which a great amount of capital is involved, which are called *crachs*. One of the most conspicuous of these crises was the failure of the *Union Générale*, a large Catholic bank founded in opposition to the Protestant and Jewish banking-houses. The director of this company, M. Boutoux, after a desperate struggle, found himself driven to the wall and forced into

CH. ix.]      OF PARIS FINANCE

bankruptcy. Many of the lesser French capitalists belonging to the clerical party were involved in this disaster, and as the distinctively Catholic party in this country is possessed, as it is well known, of large savings, the *crach* of the Union Générale was the ruin of many important families, as it was doubtless the means of enriching many of their political opponents. M. Bouteux was brought before the Tribunal and convicted.

The *crach* in Transvaal gold-mines was severely felt by Parisian financiers; but the affair which made the greatest sensation in its day was that of the Panama Canal.

The enterprise of cutting through the Isthmus of Panama had been exceedingly popular in France. It succeeded that undertaking in which M. de Lesseps had been so eminently successful, the making of the Suez Canal. Consequently Paris—and, indeed, all France—poured out its capital with enthusiasm to float the Panama Company.

This company was headed by the well-known and highly respected names of Lesseps, Fontane, and others. That love of glory which lies at the bottom of every French heart contributed no less than the hope of gain in procuring for M. de Lesseps all the funds he needed for his great enterprise.

Unhappily, M. de Lesseps was already advanced in years, and no longer capable of exerting the energy he had put forth in the management of the Suez Canal Company, and the heavy burden of the new enterprise fell entirely upon the shoulders of Charles de Lesseps, a young man of intelligence and distinction, possessing

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ix.

keen business instincts, but incapable of contending in craft and energy with the contractors who robbed the company, with the engineers, who had grown discouraged, and leagued themselves with the contractors, and finally with the banking interests of Paris, which combined against him.

Already, while engaged in launching that marvellous undertaking, the Suez Canal, M. de Lesseps had suffered from the exactions of the great Paris banking-houses. He was in the identical situation of the former Kings of France. He could obtain no advances from the bankers except on condition of pledging to them the prospective dividends of the company. Ferdinand de Lesseps, a man of action before all things, was prepared to submit to the heaviest extortions for the sake of eventually carrying out his magnificent work.

The success of that undertaking—Suez shares having attained a value of 5,000 francs—and the consequent popularity of the Lesseps, had conspired to induce the father and son to dispense with the aid of the Paris banks. But it is a law of our poor humanity that loss on one side must always balance gain on the other. Having dispensed with the support of the great bankers, Charles de Lesseps was obliged to fall back upon that of the press and the Government of the Republic.

The newspapers, accordingly, received large subsidies. The Government did not require them in order to show itself favourable to an enterprise in which so much French capital was engaged. The Panama Canal Company drew 500,000,000 francs from the public at a moderate

## CH. ix.] OF PARIS FINANCE

rate of interest, and would certainly have succeeded as a financial investment if the engineering works had been properly carried on. But it soon became evident that the work was not progressing—in fact, could hardly be said to have begun. There was everywhere a want of organization. The contractors failed to carry out their agreements, and the money of French investors was simply being poured like water into a sieve.

Charles de Lesseps, while wrestling with financial difficulties, gave little heed to the labour of digging the canal. He was made aware at last that the French public had awakened to the backward condition of the work, but he was not of the stuff of which the wielders of men are made. At this critical juncture he lost his head, and signed enormous contracts with the great builders. One of these accepted a thirty-million order, and at the expiration of the contract retired, having executed work to the amount of five or six millions and pocketed the remainder.

Then began a desperate struggle for the unfortunate Charles de Lesseps. The banking-houses which he had ignored conspired to injure his credit with the stockholders. In order to raise money, he was forced to have recourse to heroic measures. The press was bought up, immense sums being spent on advertising by the Panama Company, and this without resorting to illegal measures. Unfortunately, the company also needed, or thought it needed, to purchase parliamentary influence as well, and thus secure the right of issuing bonds at a fixed interest, as in the case of city bonds. Such an operation



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ix.

would have been perfectly justifiable at the outset, when the investment offered every ground for hope, but was far less so now that the enterprise was moribund and the company virtually ruined. The suit which was brought against the company in August, 1893, proved conclusively that attempts had been made to bribe certain deputies, and a Minister acknowledged having received 350,000 francs for not offering opposition to the projected scheme. The most distinguished names of Republican France appeared in this affair. M. de Freycinet was summoned as a witness ; M. Clémenceau was called upon to justify his relations with Cornelius Herz ; M. Floquet was forced to explain the entirely legitimate form under which the Government had accepted the co-operation of the Panama Company. Charles de Lesseps, in a clear, moving, straightforward defence, related his desperate struggle against a hopeless situation. He had been caught in a trap. Had he lost to a certain degree the exact sense of realities ? It is possible. At all events, he asserted that a financier cannot be bound by the same strict rules of probity as a private individual. In his struggle to save the credit of the company he was striving to defend the interests of the shareholder. Doubtless he had deluded himself with false hopes, but who would not have done the same in his place ? His mistake had been in choosing between the banking interests and those of the public. For this he pronounced his *mea culpa*. If he had sought the support of the banks, he would have been able to bring about a normal liquidation. The same money would have been spent, but in

## CH. ix.] OF PARIS FINANCE

accordance with an admitted formula, and no one would have uttered a protest.

This affair created an enormous scandal. An ex-Minister was condemned to three years' imprisonment. The country remained for a long time in a state of disquiet. Accusations were brought against a great number of deputies, but few of these charges were proved.

That which is clearly brought to light by such transactions and excites Parisian interest in a special degree is the extraordinary rôle played by the great adventurers, such as Reinach and Cornelius Herz, who each received millions for certain suspicious operations, and who were shown to be closely connected with the prominent political leaders.

This affair makes it evident what an inferno the world of finance may become. A man must have the tranquil certitude of a Rothschild or a Pereire in order to insure success in his transactions, and even then it requires more dexterity of handling than is commonly supposed. There are people to be interviewed, others to be entertained; some to be bribed, others to be terrorized. Incidentally, the Panama Company had to be ruined, to serve as a warning to others, to maintain financial supremacy, and show that the power of the Haute Banque cannot be ignored with impunity.

This power is incontestable. During the Manchurian War it even succeeded in floating Russian scrip on the French market. Is this power in itself entirely pernicious? Is it not grounded upon a reasonable prospect of success? It would be rash to deny it. The Haute Banque

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. ix.

rarely patronizes absolutely worthless speculations. Its interest, after all, like that of the public, is not to risk too frequent failures. The fact that it did not enter into the Panama affair was sufficient to make Parisian investors wary. Even when the great banking-houses are not honest, they are intelligent, and do not allow a critical situation to develop into a serious crisis. On principle they abhor extravagance and cultivate routine. The Suez Canal did not appear to them a good business affair; but after the Suez Canal had proved successful they would willingly have constructed that of Panama—in short, the Haute Banque is a power with which all must reckon.

The Parisian regards finance as something grandiose and mysterious; in general, he does not know very well what it is all about, but he attributes to it the power of working miracles. The words, "He has a good head for finance," are on every tongue, but in very few cases do they mean anything. The average Parisian has hardly an idea of the general mechanism of the Government finances. He knows that he pays rates and taxes, and that the State employs the money thus raised in paying the wages of its employees and executing public works. He knows that the Chambers discuss and vote the Budget; he knows that the comptroller's office audits all expenditures, and that this court is very particular, but he entertains quite false notions of the manner in which the Minister disposes of the funds granted him. He exaggerates the Ministerial power. He firmly believes that the money is swallowed up in some mysterious gulf, and

CH. ix.]      OF PARIS FINANCE

that, in spite of this loss, there remains enough, all the same, to carry on the public business. He cherishes at the same time an unmeasured confidence and an unjustifiable distrust. His municipal council appears to him impeccable, and yet he accuses it of receiving bribes. He swings from one extreme to the other—lets himself be scouted, tricked, and robbed with impunity one day, and raises an outcry the next over the theft of a match or the loss of ten centimes.

For the rest, he is what every nation has been—the good-natured giant of the story-book who lets himself be fooled by the dwarf, and who is, moreover, perfectly content to be so, which is the essential matter after all.

## CHAPTER X

### Of Education and Schools in Paris

Elementary Teaching—The Beaux Arts—The Conservatoire—The Sorbonne—Popular Education—The Student of the Latin Quarter—The Great Schools—The College of France—Free Courses

**I**T may be truly said that, in so far as education is concerned, Paris is France. There exist, indeed, provincial academies, but they are quite eclipsed in lustre by the Sorbonne or Academy of Paris. All the great schools, such as the *École Normale*, the *École Centrale*, the Polytechnic, the School of Mines, that of Pharmacy, and many others, are to be found in Paris. Moreover, the system of instruction is so excellent that it is easy to understand why every Frenchman endeavours to study under one of those great Paris professors who have a universal reputation.

The University of Paris received its statutes from Philip Augustus in 1215, and at that period all Europe sent students there—a fact which is perfectly comprehensible when we reflect that all instruction was carried on in Latin. The sciences occupied a humble position, and included only mathematics, geometry, and astronomy—in fact, theology absorbed all else. The University, however, comprised four faculties—those of theology, canon law, medicine, and the arts. This latter faculty included either the trivium—comprising grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy ; or the quadrivium—*i.e.*, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music ; this last faculty being the only one which is in existence to-day.

Let us not imagine for a moment that there were



GARDEN OF THE OBSERVATOIRE



## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

fewer students at that period than in our own day. The University of Paris possessed signal privileges, by which it attracted multitudes of students. For instance, scholars could not be arrested for debt, and even the magistrates of the city of Paris had no jurisdiction over them. Some writers are of opinion that the so-called *monômes*, and other riotous sallies of the students of our day, are reminiscences of the time when they were beyond the reach of the common law, and could indulge in any mad pranks they chose in their own quarter, without interference, at least on the part of the legal authorities. From the thirteenth century onward they constituted a body numbering from fifteen to twenty thousand. They were taught the ill-digested science of Aristotle, until the day came when observation and experience triumphed at last over the abstract logic which found expression in syllogisms.

An English monk, Roger Bacon, was the originator of this innovation in Paris. He was also the inventor of gunpowder, magnifying-glasses, and the air-pump, and having been accused of sorcery, passed long years in prison. But the struggle went on, the conservative spirit of the old Sorbonne resisting all encroachments of the new learning, and holding out so long that we find Francis I obliged to found the College of France to keep pace with the advance of science. This college was first called the College of the Three Languages—to wit, Hebrew, Greek and Latin. But all the latest developments of learning were taught there; the number of professors was constantly increased by the celebrated men



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

who flocked thither from all countries, and before long it received the name of College of the Nations.

The new Sorbonne, erected in 1882, is an immense structure, occupying the whole extent of the Rue St Jacques, from the Rue Soufflot almost to the Rue des Écoles. Its façade is adorned with figures sculptured on the friezes and pediments by Mercié and Chapu, as well as with statues by Lefèvre, Injalbert, Carlier, Cordonnier, and Souchet.

The great amphitheatre of the Sorbonne is a magnificent hall decorated with statues by Dalou, Lanson, Barrias, Coutan, and Crauk. One wall is covered by the immense fresco of Puvis de Chavannes, representing a sacred grove peopled by allegorical figures of eloquence, philosophy, history, etc.

The number and variety of schools in Paris is so great that it is only by a methodical classification that we can hope to give a general idea of them. First there are the two great divisions into elementary instruction and intermediate instruction, which correspond respectively with the needs of the working class and of the bourgeois or middle class. The teachers in the popular schools, both men and women, are drawn from the normal schools for the training of teachers, for which these same elementary schools prepare them. Thus it will be seen that this system of education forms an independent whole, the pupils in the popular schools fitting themselves to become teachers in the same schools, in accordance with the ancient symbol of the serpent who forms a circle by holding his tail in his mouth.

## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

To return to the practical point of view, the people of Paris can send their children to school at a very early age—in fact, from two years old upwards. This school is not the German kindergarten, but a little preparatory class for the elementary school. There are teachers of both sexes, whose duty it is to give the children their first instruction in morals and manners, as well as object-lessons and manual training.

On leaving these infant classes—maternal schools, as they are officially styled—the little boy or girl enters one of the communal elementary schools which are to be found in every quarter of Paris, and where the children are taught French, arithmetic, geography, history, and the rudiments of natural history.

Originally the organization stopped here, but as democratic ideas spread in France, and the people showed themselves more eager for education, little by little a branch of the higher education was organized, under the form of practical and professional schools. The type of these institutions is the national Conservatoire of Arts and Trades, which is, practically speaking, a working men's University. It is not merely practical, however, since very important theoretic courses are taught there; it has a high reputation, and many engineers make it their boast to have graduated there before entering the *Ecole Centrale*.

All Parisians, young and old alike, are familiar with the museum connected with the School of Arts and Trades, being in the habit of resorting there on Sundays in family parties to inspect the physical and chemical apparatus, the clocks, cannon, and Vancanson machines,

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

as well as factory furnishings, models and plans, collections of porcelain, etc. It is here that the platinum metre was exhibited, which serves as the standard of measurements in France. There is also a hall for experiments in acoustics and the reflection of sound; in short, it is here the child often receives his first incentive towards a scientific vocation, and that the workman learns to perfect himself in his trade.

To realize the development of this great school, we must remember that it was founded in 1794, and that in 1819 it had only three courses, while to-day it includes eighteen. The library contains 40,000 volumes, relating to industrial science, mechanical design, and the principal modern inventions; a catalogue of all existing patents is placed at the disposal of the public, and a laboratory for free experiments completes the scientific outfit.

We may include in this system the highest professional school, that of Fine Arts, which unquestionably receives more of its pupils from the elementary schools than from the *lycées*. It is at the present hour the most important school of Fine Arts in the world. Architecture, sculpture, and painting are taught there by the most eminent masters. The pupils compete for various prizes, especially the *Prix de Rome*. The conditions of this competition are extremely rigorous, the competitors being shut up "in chambers" apart from all outside influences, and obliged to produce a strictly original work of art. Those who achieve the highest degree of success are sent to the National Academy of France in Rome, which formerly occupied the Capranica Palace, later the Mancini Palace,

## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

and is now installed in the Villa Medici. The winners of the highest prizes, the *Grands Prix de Rome*, are entitled to a four years' residence at the Villa Medici, where they have their meals at a common table, and receive an annual pension of 3,510 francs, plus 1,200 francs for their travelling expenses.

The School of Fine Arts is situated in the Rue Bonaparte, the distance separating it from the Academy being so short that it can be traversed in five minutes; but when it comes to passing from the position of pupil to that of academician, a lifetime separates the one from the other, and many a student of art never attains to the Palais Mazarin. While awaiting this glory, our young men lead the artist-life. They wear gaiety like a livery; they are expected to be always even-tempered, sarcastic, and jovial; their dress must be simple, yet with a touch of the Bohemian: they must wear either a soft felt hat or a *béret*, an open vest or one buttoned up to the collar, no necktie at all, or a wide floating one, loose and free as youth and hope. If a student is unsociable, shy, or sensitive, if he has kept any of his bourgeois prejudices, his comrades well know how to grind these traits out of him in the mill of their rough practical jokes and studio pranks. Woe to him if he cannot take a joke readily, and join in a laugh at his own expense; he will be made to laugh in spite of himself. But such cases are rare; all learn quickly how to turn to the best account this general freedom from morgue and exclusiveness. Full of high spirits, jollity, and good-comradeship, they care for nothing but how to paint or draw well, to endure ad-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

verse criticism pluckily, and to aim at success in spite of sarcasm and ridicule, which are, on the whole, an excellent stimulant.

*L'École des Beaux Arts*, like the other schools of the Latin quarter, has its traditional *monôme*, or procession, usually accompanied by a picturesque cortège, in which architects, sculptors, and painters take part. But the triumph of the Beaux Arts in these late years has been what is known as the *Bal des "Quatz" Arts*, or Ball of the Four Arts. All the leading studios in Paris join in celebrating this festivity, and prizes are assigned to those who get up the most successful classic display. Let us state at once that the artists are restrained by no scruples of decorum. The hall is private, and no one is admitted except by invitation. The *tableaux-vivants*, in which the principal models figure, have caused great scandal; but it must be taken into consideration that for sculptors and painters who are accustomed to having these same models pose for the nude in their studios, the spectacle has lost any association except such as are connected with truth and beauty.

The National School of Decorative Art may be regarded as an annex to the *École des Beaux Arts*. It consists of two sections, one for young men, the other for girls.

The National Conservatoire of Music and Declamation may also be classed among popular schools. Its musicians participate in the *Prix de Rome*, and classes in singing and declamation prepare pupils for the stage. It is one of the institutions in which the public takes the keenest interest, but we do not find there the same free-



BOULEVARD ST. MICHEL



## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

dom and breadth of inspiration as at the Beaux Arts. Our budding comedians and youthful tragedians have already begun to pay the most scrupulous attention to dress; and although it is common enough among them to play jokes on one another—and it would fare ill with those who should show a surly, unsocial disposition amid the general atmosphere of youth and gaiety—yet it must be admitted that great divergencies of character exist among these future actors. Those who are destined for comedy are unlike the tragedians, and the singers are not akin to the comedians. These extremely personal arts are made up of such subtle shades that little jealousies easily arise. To please being the chief concern of all, often without knowing why one pleases and another fails to do so, a spirit of emulation is excited, which soon develops into *cabotinage*—that is to say, a perpetual sense of being before the foot-lights. The heart and mind of a comedian must necessarily be pliable, and model themselves easily upon the various characters he plays and upon the conventional sentiments that are put into his mouth, and this is apt to impart to him a wavering and mobile physiognomy. Thus the leading lady is often capricious, vain, and light; the stage hero is prone to be vainglorious, self-confident, and sceptical in affairs of the heart. It is not their fault; they do not belong to themselves; their being is like a house which changes tenants daily—a sort of caravanserai where travellers from all countries halt for a moment, and where no close intimacies are ever formed.

The Conservatoire offers as an attraction its concerts



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

and competitions—those competitions at which the mothers of the *débutantes* are present, many of them dreaming of nothing for their daughters but the life of a stage-queen. The brothers and sisters are also there; they belong usually to the class of well-to-do working people or shop-keepers. Every heart beats high as the little one appears on the stage. A score of relatives are in tears, while others affect an air of indifference or disdain. “How pretty she looks!” thinks mamma. “How well she speaks! And I am the mother of this *rara avis*!” “How badly her hair is dressed!” is the inward reflection of the mother beside her. “She has no distinction; she is not like my Irma.” Meanwhile the little girl sings, recites, or plays the piano. Applause bursts forth; it is the dawn of fame. But alas! the jury does not always share the opinion of the crowd. Sometimes, however, it lets itself be influenced by the general enthusiasm, which manifests itself in cries of “Courage, Irma!” “Bravo, Ernestine!” “Raymonde, you were admirable!” And so they return home in triumph, these little queens of a day. What will become of them in the future? One in a hundred, perhaps, will attain celebrity; but for those who can never rise above mediocrity, the stage is a deplorable profession. No matter; its fascination is too great to be resisted. There will always be Irmas, Ernestines, and Raymondes to throng the classes of the Conservatoire.

Let us now return to the younger children. We have already seen how those of the poorer classes receive an elementary education in the communal schools; those of

## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

the well-to-do meanwhile attend the smaller *lycées* or the elementary classes of the great *lycées*. At the present day the groundwork of this education is the same for rich and poor. What system of pedagogy do the teachers follow? Their methods are such as are adapted to the genius of the race; they make the faculty of language their chief concern. Language is the vehicle for all ideas: speaking and writing are forms of thinking. Reason and judgment are, therefore, instilled under the verbal form into the mind of the child, who too often possesses words before possessing ideas.

In spite of this defect, the little Parisian displays remarkable native intelligence. He is a born rebel, and has no fear of offering a vigorous resistance to academic influences; he habitually talks slang in order to throw off the too great restraint of a fixed and prescribed language. The teacher, moreover, while attempting to subject the pupil to a centralizing system which turns a scheme of education into a political programme, has himself an innate love of liberty and independence, and therefore gives a free rein to his pupils. Thus, practice corrects theory, and the French youth is allowed the right of speech, even the right of opposing his teacher. The master lives tranquilly in the midst of his turbulent scholars, because this turbulence is tempered, for the most part, by innate politeness, real delicacy of feeling, and native pride and generosity. Foreign professors and teachers who visit the Paris schools are amazed at the courteous familiarity prevailing between masters and pupils. If the words "discipline," "method," and

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

"order," occur in every sentence of the German pedagogue, those of "liberty," "responsibility," "spontaneity," flow preferably from the pen of the French educator.

In his games the Parisian schoolboy is quick and light in his movements, sweet-tempered, and full of imagination. Sports have been introduced in our schools within the last few years; but in all he does the French boy is fond of variety; he likes to follow his fancy, and skip from prisoners' base to marbles, and from spinning-top to hide-and-seek. He is keen for the things of the day, wishing to play at war while campaigns are in progress, and at Wild Indian when the exploits of the Apaches fill the newspapers. And, like the children of all countries, he would rather play the part of thief than of policemen, and of Apache than constable.

Although the fundamental idea is the same, there is some difference in the working of intermediate and elementary education. The young bourgeois—to adopt the current expression—is more closely tied down to his work than the sons of the people. He is expected to carry it further, and there is a more definite programme before him, consisting of fellowships, bachelors', doctors', and masters' degrees. There is none of that wavering and uncertainty which is found in the elementary course, the aim pursued being that of a general education rather than mere schooling. Ideas are accumulated upon ideas; grammar, arithmetic, the rudiments of Latin, history, and geography are not regarded as mere training for the mind, but as leading to the higher classes in rhetoric,

## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

philosophy, and algebra; and all must be acquired in haste, as time is limited.

Moreover, the future bourgeois is preparing himself to be the master of the working man. He is destined to take the lead everywhere—in the Government, in the army, in business, in financial affairs. Education for the people is practically useless, while for the bourgeois it is immediately applied, so that one is led to the paradoxical conclusion that the people are taught for their pleasure and the middle class from necessity. Accordingly, those famous programmes of study which so deeply interest the pedagogue concerned with popular education are devoid of interest for the professors in *lycées* and colleges.

Hundreds of volumes have been written on college life and the course of study in the *lycées*, and in most of these volumes criticism predominates. Overwork, tyrannical regulations, tactlessness on the part of the professors, are among the charges brought against these institutions. The utility of Latin on the curriculum is questioned; history is attacked for its falsity and inaccuracy, philosophy for its obscurity and inanity. But in spite of all this cavilling, every Frenchman is proud of a classical education, and of being a bachelor or master of arts. He jeers at University graduates, while at the same time he looks down upon those who have not taken a degree. The Parisian carries this weakness to excess. He plies with his epigrams everything official, but when the opportunity is offered him of entering the French Academy or receiving the Cross of the Legion

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

of Honour, he turns about and adores what he was ready to burn, explaining his conversion by the same excellent reasons which previously roused his disdain. In the same way, he warmly lauds independence of style and original turns of expression in literature, but what he really esteems are the venerable classic forms, and he worships grammar as a divinity.

All this, however, is not yet apparent in the youngsters whom we meet in the Paris streets of a fine morning on their way to school. The son of the people differs in no respect from the other boys. They are all great dawdlers, much given to staring at nothing in particular, and to indulging in the games appropriate to the season as they troop along the side-walks in companies, whistling, giving cat-calls, jostling each other, playing leap-frog, and jumping over any obstacle in the shape of benches or ditches which they find in their way, stopping anon for a ten-minute game of marbles attended with much squabbling, then *en route* again.

Education in the elementary schools tends towards the humble aim of a certificate of study. The simple degree and higher degree (*Brevet simple* and *Brevet supérieur*) are, indeed, accessible to children of the people, but are usually sought for only by young girls of the middle class. There was a time when these degrees afforded an opening to the career of a teacher, but those days are past. Instructors, both male and female, now graduate from the normal schools, while teachers in the intermediate schools for girls graduate from the two higher normal schools of Sèvres and Fontenay.

## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

Thus the children of artisans receive a limited education in the elementary schools, taught by former pupils of these same schools, but under the direction of members of a higher social class, since it is the professors in the normal schools, belonging chiefly to the bourgeoisie, who train the instructors of the people. On leaving school, the artisan's son usually enters on his apprenticeship. If he has ambition, however, and his parents have the means of gratifying it, he may attend the higher municipal schools, such as those of Turgot, Colbert, Jean Baptiste, Say, Lavoisier, Arago, or Sophie Germain, where he is fitted for a commercial, industrial, or financial career; or if he prefers to become a good foreman, he can attend an industrial school (also municipal), such as the *École Bernard Palissy*, in order to perfect himself in the application of art to industry, or the *École Diderot*, where they teach the trades of metal and woodwork, or the *École Boule*, where he will be taught artistic and practical cabinet-making; or the *École Étienne*, where he can acquire the art and industry of bookbinding, typography, lithography, engraving, and photography; or the *École Dorion*, where he can become an artistic carpenter and joiner, modeller, mechanic, ironworker, or locksmith. He can also initiate himself into the gardener's profession at the municipal school of arboriculture or the *Institut National Agronomique*.

The girl has, like the boy, the option of entering a normal school for teachers or a municipal trades-school. There are six of these latter, in which she can learn dressmaking, millinery, embroidery, drawing and paint-

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

ing, business, linen drapery, straw-hat making, corset making, cookery, ironing, flower and feather making. Here ends the education of our young man or girl of the working class. However, we may come across them later, if they have the desire and ambition for a higher education, either at adult schools or at the various free courses afforded by the *École du Louvre*, *École pratique des Hautes Études*, *Collège de France*, *Conférences des Arts et Métiers*, or the great private schools, such as the *École d'Anthropologie*, the *École libre des Sciences Sociales*, etc. Let us add that working men are rarely to be met with at these courses, which are thronged, on the other hand, by clerks in business houses and Government offices. In the case of children of the poorer class who are blind or deaf and dumb, they are taught and cared for at the *Institution Nationale des Jeunes Aveugles*, where they learn the art of reading with the fingers the raised alphabet invented by Braille, or at the *Institution Nationale des Sourds-Muets*, where they are taught the sign language.

We left our young collegian, the child of well-to-do citizens, or of those who have made sacrifices in behalf of his education, on the eve of taking his degree, when he already feels his wings sprouting. He is, in fact, about to take his flight, to achieve independence and make a career for himself. If he follows the regular channel, he will complete his studies at the *lycée* with the degree of B.A. This degree, formerly confined to science and letters, now admits of a third branch requiring neither Latin nor Greek. The baccalaureate opens wide the

## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

doors of the various faculties, and paves the way to masters' and doctors' degrees.

Our young collegian can also prepare himself for the higher schools, such as the *École Normale Supérieure*, *École Polytechnique*, and *École Centrale*. He will have learnt a host of things which his former school-fellow in the elementary school has never heard of. He will also have passed through a severe ordeal, consisting of over-study, close confinement, severity on the part of the masters, the torture of exams., and the possible trial of being plucked. And in many cases, by the time he has finally attained his goal and become a lawyer, engineer, or doctor, the family funds are exhausted, and the poor fellow, thrown on his own resources, and unable as yet to earn his bread, is doomed to stumble and fall on the very threshold of the promised land. But we are not there yet. He has just returned from the Sorbonne, where he has won his B.A., and finds himself in the midst of his assembled family, his parents hardly able to recognize their boy, who has passed seven or eight years away from home. What will he do now? Should he feel drawn towards the Normal, Polytechnic, or Central School, or towards St Cyr, he has only to return to the *lycée* and take up a special course.

The *École Polytechnique* is the great Government school for the higher mathematics. Its programme is terribly severe, consisting of differential and integral calculus, theoretical and applied mechanics, and the higher branches of physics. The pupils are destined in theory for the army, and many, in fact, enter its élite



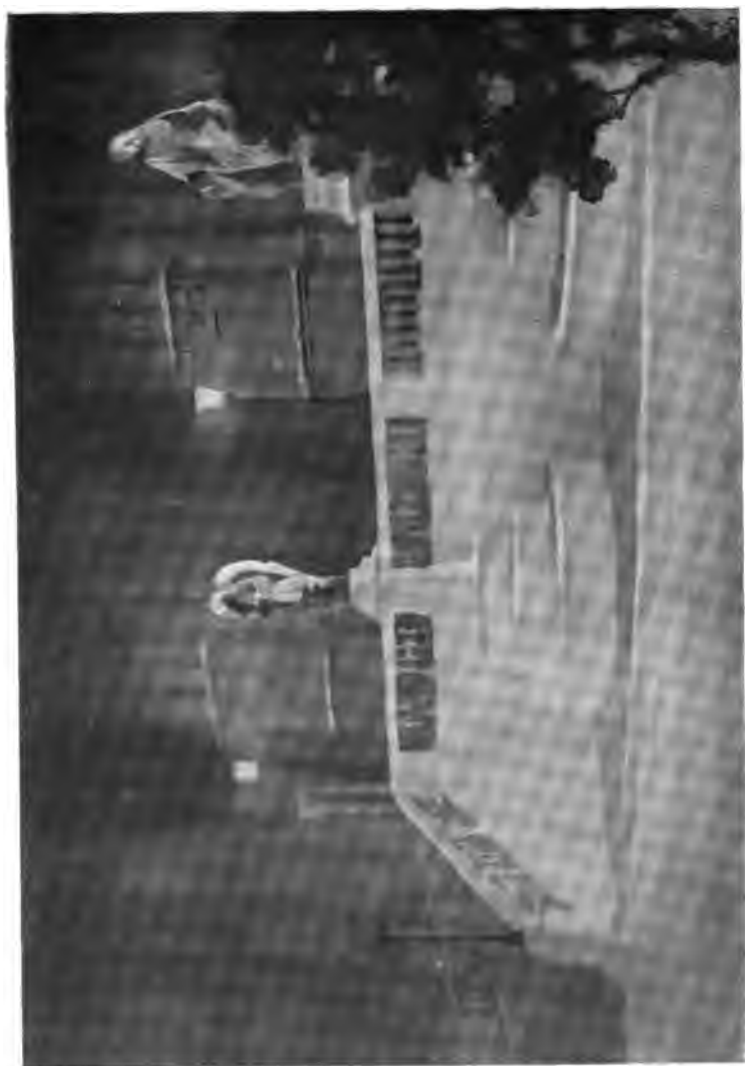
## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

corps, such as the artillery and military and naval engineer corps. Others prefer the Administration, and prepare themselves to occupy important posts on the Coast Survey, in the Naval Commissariat and in Civil Engineering, as well as the Government factories of tobacco and saltpetre and the State Telegraph Company. They can only hold these civil posts, however, after passing through other special schools, such as the School of Mines, of Engineering, etc.

The Polytechnician is one of the marked Parisian types. He wears a smart uniform, with a two-cornered hat and sword, and on Sundays and fête-days, when he walks abroad, the centre of a proud family group, his appearance is always greeted with favour by the populace of Paris. He was formerly revolutionary in his opinions, but at present inclines to the reactionary party. Such are the surprises of history! The sons of the bourgeoisie, who were ardently republican under the monarchy, revert to monarchical sentiments under a republic.

The Polytechnician has a brother-in-arms, the St Cyrian, and both are popular in Paris, the one for his cocked hat, the other for his *panache* of white feathers.

Although the Polytechnicians are young students ranging from seventeen to twenty years of age, they do not form part of what is commonly regarded as the gay youth of the schools: they are boarders cooped up within the school walls, and also under the restraint of their curriculum, which is a very severe one, lasting for three years.



LA TRINITÉ



## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

The other great Government school of Paris is the *École Normale*, which is undoubtedly the most celebrated, not that it has turned out more noteworthy savants than the Polytechnique, but because it has been a nursery of distinguished professors, journalists, literary and art critics, political orators, historians and novelists. It has produced savants like Pasteur, historians like Augustin Thierry, novelists such as About, critics such as Taine, and orators like Jaurès.

The *École Polytechnique* and the *École Normale* are situated to the north and south, at an equal distance from the Panthéon, the burial-place of our national celebrities—the French Westminster Abbey, which thus stands between them, as if to incite their pupils to emulation in the path of fame.

The uniform of the *Normale* student is no less military than that of the Polytechnician, including a cocked hat and a sword. Many of these students wear the serious aspect of thinkers. They are destined to become, later on, eminent professors in *lycées* and colleges, or members of the learned faculties. These two schools were creations of the Revolution. The Polytechnique was founded by a decree of the Convention in March, 1794, the *École Normale* by a decree of the same assembly on October 30, 1794. Their fortunes have been widely different, the *Ecole Normale* having been suppressed by Louis XVIII in 1822, and finally re-established by Louis Philippe in 1830, while the Polytechnique has been in favour with all régimes.

The *École Centrale* is a sort of Polytechnique, where

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

students are trained as Civil Engineers, and which gives the diploma of Engineer of Arts and Manufactures. Outside of these schools, there are various others which open their doors to our bachelor; he can enter a School of Pharmacy, a Colonial School, a Veterinary School, as well as the *École des Chartes*, the *École des Sciences Politiques*, etc.

Those who do not decide for either of these schools are distributed among the four Faculties of Law, Medicine, Letters and Science. The Faculty of Law gives the degrees of bachelor, master, and doctor; that of Letters creates masters and doctors; that of Science gives doctoral and magisterial degrees; while that of Medicine trains doctors only. Students of the Faculty are known as "Students" *par excellence*. They are the gay sons of the Latin quarter, and all the legends which have clustered about Bohemian Paris have for their scene the student's attic-chamber. In the popular mind, the student is a happy compound of recklessness, rakishness, and noble aspirations. He wears fantastic garments, including a *béret*, a waistcoat of weird cut, and a loose tie; he smokes huge pipes, frequents the wine-shops, and runs after light girls, and in spite of all this he preserves his original nobility of nature. He is still the youth sketched by Polonius in Hamlet:

" But, sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips  
As are conspicuous noted and well known  
In youth and liberty—  
As gaming, drinking, fencing, swearing,  
Quarrelling, drabbing—  
These may seem the taints of liberty,  
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,  
And savageness in unreclaimed blood."



Café in the Rue Royale



## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

How does this dissipated youth learn anything? This remains an impenetrable mystery. Never at his classes, always at the tavern or the theatre with "*Mimi Pinson*" on his arm, or else engaged in organizing *monômes* or getting up revolutions! Finally, he deigns to put on a gown and passes his exams. by a stroke of luck. This conception of the student's life is not an antiquated one. Flaubert, one of the greatest and most scrupulously observant of French novelists, in his novel of "*L'Éducation Sentimentale*," draws his Frédéric attempting to pass an examination without knowing the first word of it. The questioner chaffs him, a ray of sunlight dazzles the big fellow's eyes, and when he finally does reply it is at random, on some subject which recalls one of his tavern discussions. He is plowed, to be sure; but a comrade helps him to cram for the next session, at which he passes triumphantly. Certainly, for our day, the picture is somewhat exaggerated. The student at present is a fine young man who dresses like everybody else, dines out, and frequents the theatres of the right bank rather than his old Odéon; but something of the lawyer's clerk of old days hangs about him still.

And now that we have seen what this great city of Paris does for the poor man's sons, and what the Government does for those of the well-to-do class, does this cover the whole ground? Not at all. Ideas on the subject of education are perhaps those which the French people have carried furthest. Little pedantic as this nation is, it has a great love for schools, classes, and lectures. Besides the official teaching which leads to grades, offices, and



## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

honours, it requires a more disinterested course of instruction, where people of every age and condition can listen to the priceless words of the professor, gather up the manna of learning, and enjoy an initiation into literature, art, and philosophy. This instinct of the race does not belong exclusively to our own time; it presided over the foundation of the College of France by Francis I.

This college, at the present day, not only offers strictly academic instruction, but gives opportunities for the higher education in general. Everything is to be found there, from the higher mathematics to philology, including ancient literature, contemporary literature, and the Oriental languages and philosophy. Every subject is treated with a view to ultimate perfection.

Certain courses are followed by two or three persons only. They tell the story of a professor of mathematics who was neither Bertrand nor Jordan; this professor, who was extremely absent-minded, like all who deal in abstractions, had lectured for a whole year to only one pupil. He was perfectly satisfied that it should be so, but it occurred to him one day that he ought to congratulate this rare disciple. "Monsieur does not recognize me," replied the pupil. "I am monsieur's coachman, and I always wait here until Monsieur has finished his lecture."

This anecdote shows how far the Collège de France carries its scrupulousness. Every scientific subject, even the most abstruse, will continue to be taught there as long as one solitary individual in all Europe desires to pursue it. The purely abstract courses are naturally the

## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

least followed; physics and chemistry, which give occasion for interesting experiments, draw more students, but the most attractive courses are those in history, literature, and philosophy. These are often taught by great masters, such as Renan, Ribot, Gaston Pâris. The blood of ancient Gaul stirs anew in these worthy descendants. Those of whom Julius Cæsar said that they loved above everything "fighting and fine speaking" have remained eager in their pursuit of literature, controversy, and history. It is rare for a great Frenchman to be keenly appreciated in his own country unless he has something of a literary turn of mind. The Claude Bernards, the Pasteurs, the Berthelots, and Poincarés, were aware of the importance of "a word in its place," according to the precept of Boileau, and did not disdain a spice of wit. All wrote well, and some of them were gifted with splendid eloquence. Renan was a marvellous talker, and Berthelot an orator of lofty flight. This learned chemist was also Minister of Foreign Affairs, and his political discourses were models, at the same time, of mastery of the subject and of finished language.

This tradition is not lost at the Collège de France, neither is it neglected at the Sorbonne, where free instruction is conducted on the widest scale, concurrently with lessons intended especially for future doctors and masters of art. In fact, the Sorbonne professor has often been laughed at for posing before a feminine audience; for waving a white, well-kept hand, and uttering telling phrases on love, passion, and the soul; for playing, in

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

short, the rôle of a ridiculous savant. Molière had already castigated his follies; and in a more recent play, *Le Monde où l'on s'ennuie*, Pailleron has rediscovered him under the name of Bellac.

All these courses, free as they are, seem to be still too official to satisfy the Parisian mind. They have accordingly instituted at the Sorbonne a series of free courses by men who have no official title: it is only necessary that they should have distinguished themselves in some special branch of learning, the diffusion of which may interest the public.

In order to be complete, this summary must add to the list of State institutions giving free instruction the School of Oriental Languages, where they teach Arabic, Persian, Turkish, modern Greek, Chinese, Japanese, Hindustani, Zamoub, Russian, and Roumanian; also the *École du Louvre*, where lectures are given on history, archæology, and the fine arts; the Museum of Natural History, with which are connected the *Jardin des Plantes* and the Zoological Garden.

The Museum of Natural History is one of the most interesting institutions in Paris.

The *Jardin des Plantes* was founded by Jean Hérouard, Charles Bouvard, and Guy de la Drosse, the physician of Louis XIII, and dates back to 1635; the other departments were added later. The classes and lectures at the Museum treat of all subjects relating to the natural sciences. Eighteen chairs are occupied by as many professors, who teach botany, zoology, palæontology, conchology, comparative anatomy, etc.

## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

Even this system of State education, so vast and extensive, does not suffice for minds eager for novelty. Science, as taught in the Government schools, has shown too great a tendency to convention and routine for an élite of audacious minds; new courses and schools have therefore been established—such, for example, as the School of Anthropology. This is a sort of unofficial Collège de France, where various courses are given on those sciences which have some direct relation to man. One of its most distinguished professors has remarked that this school might give lessons in geometry and drawing without overstepping the appointed limits, these branches being quite as anthropological as many of those taught there.

In practice, they content themselves with courses on anatomy, zoology, prehistoric man, physiopsychology, and, in short, with anthropology properly so called—*i.e.*, the study of such manifestations of our organism as can give a basis for general laws. The founder of the school was Broca. The weight and volume of the brain, the shape of its convolutions, the facial angles, the cerebral localization of our mental faculties, general race-characteristics, such as the pigments of the skin, the growth of the hair and beard, the shape of the nose, etc., are the bases of this science.

A special audience takes its seat on the benches of this school. The anthropologist is almost always a materialist, therefore certain prepossessions blend with the teaching here. Comparative anatomy becomes a source of arguments against spiritual religion. Nevertheless, one

## THE COLOUR OF PARIS [CH. X.

occasionally meets priests at these lectures, drawn thither by their desire to learn the arguments of a subtle adversary. After the lesson, the audience congratulates the professor; the atmosphere is that of a family. The pupils are of mature years, and sometimes include aged men and women. A sincere enthusiasm for science attracts a certain number of worthy tradesmen retired from business, who can thus taste the pleasure they have long coveted of finding themselves in the society of learned professors.

Finally, the tribe of Paris vagrants sends its representatives, clad in rusty, threadbare coats, who huddle around the big stove to bask in its warmth, and usually fall asleep before the lecture is over. The staff of teachers is not hard upon these poor wretches, who sometimes, on snowy winter nights, are the only audience at the less popular courses.

Other schools and courses are the General Psychological Institute, the Free College of Social Science, the Philotechnic Association, etc. And, although it may already seem to our readers as if Paris were only a great school, in which half of the inhabitants are engaged in giving lessons to the other half, the list does not end here. As a consequence of the Dreyfus affair, the lettered bourgeoisie threw themselves with ardent zeal into the cause of the education of the people. Popular Universities were accordingly opened everywhere, in which those who were not yet professors could speedily become so. This rounds the full cycle, and brings education by the learned faculties back into the hands of the people, through a

## CH. X.] OF EDUCATION IN PARIS

network similar to the capillaries which connect the arterial system with the veins. This last development is still too recent to admit of our judging it, but, so far as we can foresee, it seems destined to speedy extinction.



# INDEX

**A**BBAYE aux Bois, the, 55  
Académie Française, the, 178,  
179, 180

Alphand, 41  
Altar of the Boatmen, 2, 3, 5  
Antiquaries in Paris, 52, 53  
Antoine, M., 114, 115, 116, 117  
Arc de Triomphe, the, 84  
Arc du Carrousel, the, 84  
Artificial flower-making, 79  
Asson, Baudry d', 105  
Aurevilly, Barbey d', 129  
Auteuil, the aqueduct of, 4

**B**ACON, Roger, 235  
Bakehouse, the Army, 194  
Balzac, 50  
Bamberger, Henri, 215  
Barthou, M., 103  
Bataille, Henry, 118  
Becque, Henri, 117  
Bergson, M., 151  
Bièvre, the, 54, 55  
Bois de Boulogne, the, 30, 43, 44,  
45, 46, 47  
Bois de Vincennes, the, 43, 46,  
47  
"Bon Bec," the, 14  
Bookstalls upon the quays, 36  
Bouchor, Maurice, 77  
Boulangier, 95, 96  
Bourgeois, Léon, 107  
Bourse, the, 222-225  
Bourse du Travail, the, 73, 74  
Bread-delivery in Paris, 60  
Briand, Aristide, 92, 99, 100, 101,  
106

Brun, General, 204  
Budget, the, 216-219

**C**AFE-CONCERTS, 122, 123  
Caillaux, M., 101, 102  
Camando, Count Isaac de, 215  
Camps, French military, 193, 194  
Carnavalet, the Musée, 20  
Carré, Albert, 116  
Casimir Périer, 87, 88  
Cemeteries, the Paris, 49, 50  
Censorship of plays in France, 129,  
130  
Centrale, the École, 251, 252  
Chabroux, M., 77  
Chamber of Deputies, the, 84, 104,  
105, 106  
Champs Élysées, the, 30, 31,  
32  
Charpentier, Gustave, 78  
Château Rouge, the, 55  
Chaumette, 34  
Childebert, 6  
Children, Parisian, 242, 243, 244,  
246, 247  
Claretie, Jules, 112, 113  
Clémenceau, Georges, 92 - 99,  
106  
Clovis, the Castle of, 5, 6  
College of France, the, 26, 235, 254,  
255, 256  
Colonne, Édouard, 120  
Column of July, the, 27, 52  
Combes, M., 107  
Confédération Générale du Travail,  
the, 75, 76, 98, 108, 109  
Conscription, 207, 208, 209



## INDEX

Conservatoire of Arts and Trades,  
the, 237, 238  
Coquelin, M., 120  
Cros, Charles, 32

**D**AUMESNIL, General, 48  
Deschanel, M., 106  
Desprès, Mme. Susanne, 122  
Dœuillet, M., 143  
Doucet, Jacques, 142, 143  
Doumer, M., 106  
Dressmakers in Paris, 63, 64, 139  
Dreyfus case, the, 97, 102  
Dussaulx, 34

**É**COLE des Beaux Arts, l', 240  
École Normale, 251  
Education, 76, 77, 78, 79, 234-259  
Edward VII, King, 89, 90  
Élysée Palace, the, 85, 86  
Eudea, Duke of Aquitaine, 7, 13

**F**AGUET, Émile, 151  
Fallières, Armand, 89, 90, 91,  
92  
Faure, Félix, 88  
*Faust*, a performance at the Opéra,  
147, 148  
Ferry, Jules, 94  
Fire Brigade, the, 191  
Flaubert, 253  
Fortifications of Paris, the, 192, 193  
France, Anatole, 119  
Freycinet, M. de, 107

**G**AMBETTA, 93, 94  
Gémier, M. de, 117  
Gobelins tapestry, the, 24  
Gobelins gardens, the, 53, 54  
Goncourt, Edmond and Jules de,  
110

Goujon, Jean, 16, 19, 20  
Grévy, Jules, 86, 87  
Griffuchles, Victor, 109  
Guesde, Jules, 109  
Guitry, M., 118

**H**ALLARD, Miss Alya, 155  
Hausmann, 44, 49  
Haute Banque, the, 212, 213  
Hénard, Eugène, 29  
Henry II, 17, 20, 22  
Henry IV, King, 9, 16, 20, 22  
Hôtel des Invalides, the, 24  
Hôtel des Tournelles, 21, 22  
Hotel de Ville, the, 85  
Hôtel Dieu, 7  
Hottinguer, Baron, 215  
Hugo, Victor, 11, 19, 23, 31, 38  
Huysmans, J. K., 8, 36, 50, 53,  
54, 55

**I**LE de la Cité, 3, 4, 12, 35  
Izoulet, M., 151

**J**ARDIN d'Acclimatation, the, 37  
Jardin des Plantes, the, 37, 256  
Jaurès, M., 105, 109

**K**ARR, Alphonse, 153

**L**ABOURERS in Paris, 61, 62,  
63  
Lemaître, Jules, 124, 151, 152  
Lenôtre, 33  
Lescot, Pierre, 15, 16, 17, 19  
Lesseps, the de, 227-230  
Lévis, M., 144  
Literary classifications, 180, 181,  
182  
Loubet, Émile, 88, 89

# INDEX

Louis IX (St Louis), King of France, 9, 11, 12, 13, 47  
 Louis XIII, King, 16, 21, 22  
 Louvre, the, 15, 21  
 Lutetia, 1, 2, 3, 4, 41  
 Luxembourg, gardens of the, 38  
 Luxembourg Palace, 85  
 Lyceum, the, Women's Club, 155, 156

**M**ACMAHON, Marshal, 86  
 Madeleine, the, 4, 8152, 153  
 Mallet, Baron, 216  
*Mannequin*, the, 141, 142  
 Marais, the, 24, 39  
 Market-porters, Parisian, 59  
 Martel, Charles, 7  
 Masson, Frédéric, 151  
 Maternal-schools, 71  
 Méline, M., 99  
 Michelet, 19, 26  
 Militarism, decline of French, 195-202  
 Military Control and Tactics, 204-208  
 Milkmen, Parisian, 59  
 Milliners in Paris, 63, 64  
 Montereau, Pierre de, 12  
 Montfaucon, the gallows of, 41  
 Montmartre, 4  
 Montmartre, the Buttes, 42, 43  
 Montmartre, the cemetery of, 50  
 Montparnasse, the cemetery of, 50  
 Montsouris, the park of, 42  
 Mun, Comte Albert de, 105, 106  
 Municipal Council, the, 107  
 Musset, Alfred de, 50

Notre Dame, 1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 21, 85

**O**VERCROWDING, 80, 81, 82

**P**ALACE of the Cæsars, 4  
 Palace of the Cité, 12, 13  
 Palais Bourbon, the, 84  
 Palais de l'Industrie, the, 31  
 Palais de Justice, 14, 15  
 Palais Royal, garden of the, 38, 39, 40  
 Panama Canal *crack*, the, 227-230  
 Pantheon, the, 24-26  
 Paquin, Isidore, 143  
 Pelletan, Camille, 105  
 People's theatre, a, 136, 137  
 Pereires, the, 215  
 Père Lachaise, cemetery of, 50  
 Perrault, Claude, 17  
 Picard, Ernest, 44  
 Picquart, General, 102, 103, 202, 203, 204  
 Place de la Bastille, the, 52  
 Place de la Concorde, the, 33  
 Place Royale, the, 21, 22, 23, 24, 39  
 Place Vendôme, the, 51, 52  
 Place des Victoires, the, 51, 52  
 Poë, Lugné, 122  
 Poincaré, Raymond, 107  
 Polytechnique, the École, 249, 250, 251  
 Porel, M., 118, 119  
 Postmen, Parisian, 65  
 Press, the Parisian, 164-178

**N**APOLEON I, 26, 30, 42, 85  
 Neuilly, the Fair of, 124

**Q**UINET, Edgar, 25, 26

## INDEX

**R**ACES, the, 44, 45  
 Rag-pickers in Paris, 61  
 Reboux, Caroline, 144  
 Redfern, Mr., 143, 144  
 "Reine Blanche," the, 54  
 Réjane, Mme., 118, 119  
 Relics, Christian, purchased by  
     Louis IX, 11, 12  
 Renan, 135  
 Renaudot, Théophraste, 164  
 Republican Guards, the, 191  
 Restaurants, 66, 67, 68  
 Review of the troops, a, 184-189  
 Ribot, M., 105  
 Rostand, Edmond, 113  
 Rothschilds, the, 213, 214  
 Rouvier, M., 107

**S**ACRÉ Cœur, Church of the, 43  
 Sadi Carnot, 87  
 Sainte Chapelle, the, 4, 12, 85  
 St Étienne du Mont, 85  
 Ste Geneviève, Abbey of, 6  
 Ste Geneviève, Mont, 3, 5, 7, 8, 25  
 St Germain des Près, 6, 7  
 St Germain l'Auxerrois, 7  
 St Jacques de la Boucherie, Church  
     of, 19  
 St Martin des Champs, Monastery  
     of, 7  
 Secret Funds, the, 220, 221  
 Sempstresses, 71, 72  
 Simyan, M., 103  
 Smedley, Miss Constance, 155

Sorbonne, the, 234, 235, 236  
 Soufflot, 25  
 Squares, the, 48  
 Stein, Edgard, 215  
 Street cries, 65, 66  
 Sully Prudhomme, 57

**T**AXATION, 220, 221  
 Thermæ, the, 4, 41  
 Thermæ, Palace of the, 7, 18  
 Thiers, Adolphe, 50, 86  
 Tour d'Argent, 14  
 Tower of Cæsar, 14  
 Toy-making in Paris, 69  
 Trocadéro, the, 42  
 Tuileries, the, 34

**U**NEMPLOYED, the Parisian,  
     69, 70  
 Union Générale, the, 226, 227  
 Universities, popular, 76, 77  
 University of Paris, the, 234

**V**EILLÉES *de Plaisance*, 77  
 Viviani, M., 103  
*Voix du Peuple, La*, 75, 109

**W**ADDINGTON, M., 107  
 Women-clerks in Paris, 64  
 Women-servants, Parisian, 161, 162  
 Worth, M., 142

**Z**OLA, Émile, 58, 117





2

